

*Report on*  
**Truro House**  
*176 Green Lanes, Palmers Green*

*by*  
Emily Cole  
and  
Andy Wittrick

Historical Analysis & Research Team

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## ***Contents***

1.0	Nature of Request.....	3
2.0	The Building Described.....	4
3.0	Early Origins and Development.....	5
4.0	Later nineteenth-century History and Alterations.....	8
5.0	Early twentieth-century History and Alterations.....	10
6.0	Subsequent Alterations.....	14
7.0	Gardens and Outbuildings.....	15
8.0	Conclusion.....	16
9.0	Sources and References.....	17
	List of Illustrations.....	18

## ***1.0 Nature of Request***

*Truro House has recently been sold for development after being owned by the same family for one hundred years. Little is currently known about the structure and its historical development.*

*Advice was sought from HART with regards to the quality and relative architectural and historic value of the surviving fabric of the house, together with the gardens and ancillary buildings, in order to identify and safeguard the special interest of the building and to inform EH's response to any listed building consent applications which may be made. The interiors had not been studied and the current narrative provided by the statutory list description was based on an external inspection only. A chance was provided for a limited examination of the fabric after the structure became vacant shortly after the sale,*

*This brief report comprises a description based upon site observation following a single visit, limited examination and review of cartographic and other historic sources and an assessment of the extent, character and significance of fabric of either architectural or historical interest. A detailed history of the fabric of this structure is made complicated by the numerous alterations which have occurred as the building has historically evolved and the lack of conclusive documentary evidence. Only surfaces exposed on the day were examined and no disturbance to the fabric was undertaken.*

Origin of Request: *Ray Rogers (North and East London team)*  
Date of Request: *14 April 2000*  
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## 2.0 *The Building Described*

Truro House is situated on the eastern side of Green Lanes, set back from the road opposite Palmers Green Library and old Southgate Town Hall, and at the junction with Broomfield Lane and Oakthorpe Road, London N13. The New River forms its southern boundary (Map 7). Truro House is listed Grade II. The front wall and gate, and the side wall, are listed separately (see List Description).

The building is of load-bearing brick construction, with shallow roofs of slate. The principal elevation to Green Lanes consists of three bays plus one, with two storeys and a basement. The casement windows are covered by green-painted louvred shutters (Fig.1). The south front boasts two bay windows, quite opposite in character (Fig.2). That closest to Green Lanes is single storied and semi-circular, with attached Ionic columns. To its east, a square fronted, mock-Tudor timbered bay rises through both stories, and is capped by a gable (Fig. 3). The east front, not visible from the road, is of plain stock brick. Only the windows on the northern section of the front are shuttered (Fig. 4). The north front of Truro House is mainly window-less, and is hidden behind the boundary wall (Fig. 5). As a whole, the house reads as a slightly unconventional early to mid nineteenth-century villa, re-worked in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

In plan, the house has the conventional double-pile arrangement, but with an unorthodox, staggered layout of two principal living rooms to the front and one to the rear, with a large, elongated service room to the north (Fig. 6). The staircase is situated centrally and forms part of the entrance hall, onto which the main front entrance from Green Lanes opens directly. Access to the principal and service rooms runs the full depth of the house. On the upper floor the plan repeats, with four main rooms and a small bathroom over the entrance below. Differences in floor height have required the need for small flights of steps providing narrow, direct access between rooms.

The grounds, covering an area of 1.33 acres, are formal in design with walks down to and along the New River. To the east are ancillary buildings consisting of 'Gardener's Cottage' (coach-house, stables, workshop, accommodation), kennels, greenhouse, and sheds (Figs. 7, 8, 9).

### 3.0 *Early Origins and Development*

The earliest building on the site now occupied by Truro House was probably erected after July 1612, when the New River was cut around Palmers Green. By 1673, a public house had been established on the site, the name of which varied between 'The Three Nightingales', 'The Rose' and 'The King's Arms'. 'The King's Arms' was adopted as the formal name in 1775, and resulted in the road leading to Chequers Green being called King's Arms Lane.<sup>1</sup> This name was changed to Oakthorpe Road as late as 1903, and the neighbouring bridge over the New River is still known as King's Arms Bridge. In 1801, the owners were Enfield brewers Beckitt & Ostliffe, who also ran the King's Head on Winchmore Hill Green. The extent of the site can be seen on the 1801 Enclosure Map as running from the corner of King's Arms Lane down to the Cock Tavern (now the junction with the North Circular Road) (Maps 1 and 2). The King's Arms occupies a prominent, open position opposite the road leading to Broomfield House. The building's front to Green Lane is shown as divided by a fence or wall. The section jutting out into King's Arms Lane was most probably a coach-house with accommodation above. The last licence was granted in 1817 to Mr George Airs, and the pub was then closed.<sup>2</sup> The following notice appeared in the *Hertfordshire Mercury* on 19 April 1828, under the title 'Enfield and Edmonton, Public Houses, etc':-

'Leifchild & Snelling have received instructions from the Devises in Trust to let in Lease, by Public Auction 14 free Public Houses Several Dwelling Houses Cottages and land, Enfield and Edmonton, Mddx.....also on the same day will be sold by Public Auction a Freehold Estate (late the Kings Arms Public House Palmers Green) with convenient offices and about 40 acres of meadow land...'.<sup>3</sup>

We now pass into a period of obscurity for Truro House, which is near impossible to identify amongst the 'cottages', 'houses' and 'land' listed in Palmers Green for the 1840s and 1850s. It was presumably built some time after the sale, in the early 1830s, but its name dates from some years later. It has been claimed that the house was occupied by Lord Chancellor Sir Thomas Wilde (1782-1855), created Baron Truro in 1850, but this is inaccurate.<sup>4</sup> Lord Truro is clearly listed at Bowes Manor in the 1845 and 1855 *Kelly's Directories*, a substantial house which stood further south along Green Lanes. He acquired the lease of Bowes Manor some time around 1820 or 1830 and was succeeded as lessee by Thomas Sidney, a former mayor of London<sup>5</sup>. The Manor was sold in the 1890s and demolished soon after. Nevertheless, there is some evidence that Lord Truro owned some land very close to — if not exactly the same as — that on which Truro House now stands. In the 1850 Rate Book, for example, Sir Thomas Wilde is given as the owner of a House and Premises (numbered 272) and some land (273). The numbering continues with The Cock Inn at 274 and reaches Bowes Manor at 297, where Wilde is listed once more.<sup>6</sup> The *Palmers Green and Southgate Gazette* for 30 May 1974

- 1 Information kindly given by Mr Gary Boudier, whose work on the pubs of Enfield will be published in three parts.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 *Hertfordshire Mercury*, 19 April 1828. Transcription by Gary Boudier in the Enfield Local History Unit.
- 4 This claim is made, for example, in the present list description.
- 5 See: Note supplied by Frank Bruce (April 1969) and article in the *Palmers Green and Southgate Gazette*, 30 May 1974. Both are in the Truro House file in the Local History Unit.
- 6 1850 Rate Book. See also the 1852 Valuation List where 'Lord Truro' appears in pencil against numbers S28 and S29.

states:-

'In August 1845 he [Lord Truro] married, as his second wife, Augusta D'Este, daughter of the Duke of Sussex and cousin of Queen Victoria. Shortly afterwards, it is recorded that he took a lease of the King's Arms site, once part of the manor of Edmonton.'

The *Gazette* then claims that after Wilde's death 'his childless widow Augusta continued the lease at Truro Cottage, as the 'petit maison' at the corner of King's Arms Lane was then called. The Truro connection seems to have terminated with Augusta's death in 1866'.<sup>7</sup> It is unclear on what evidence this claim rests, and is unlikely that Lord Truro or his widow ever lived in Truro House, though they may indeed have owned the land. What is probable is that the house, about half a mile north of Bowes Manor, was named in Lord Truro's honour some time between 1850 and 1855. Its position does not signify, as has been put forward, that the house ever formed a lodge to the Manor.

The next mention of the site of Truro House comes in 1858, when Henrietta Cresswell stood to watch the Great Comet of 1858, as recounted in her *Memories of a Lost Village*:-

'A candle in the window of the gable roofed 'Cock Inn' made a point of light. The 'Kings Arms' which gave the name to the bridge had already ceased to exist. The site was occupied by a nursery garden, and a faint perfume of mignonette mingled with the evening air'.<sup>8</sup>

There is no evidence that the site of Truro House was ever a nursery. However, given that the adjoining piece of land *did* become a nursery (Bowes Nursery), and that both sites were under the same ownership in 1801, it is possible that both were put to the same use after the sale of 1828. This would do something to explain the large glass-houses which are shown attached to the structure in the 1867 OS map (Map 3). Also possible is that Cresswell mistook the site of the King's Arms for the neighbouring plot, as she looked out in the fading light.

In 1861 'Truro Cottage', as it was then called, makes its first named appearance in the Census. Elizabeth Ward, a 60 year old 'Proprietress of Houses' is given as the Head, and she lives with one unmarried daughter. In 1867, Truro Cottage is shown on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map, and in the same year the *Kelly's Directories* list a Charles Noah Foster, esq., at the address. By 1870, Foster — a 38 year old Builder and Contractor — had moved to the substantial mansion, Oakthorpe. It is probable that Foster lodged at Truro Cottage in order to carry out or oversee the works at Oakthorpe, which was just on the other side of King's Arms Lane (the road was renamed Oakthorpe Road in 1901/2). In 1871, 33 year old William Morris — a worker in the Stock Exchange — moved into Truro Cottage, with his wife, four children a governess and a general servant. The Morrisses are listed again on the 1881 Census and make their last appearance in the *Kelly's Directory* for 1882.

As shown on the 1867 Ordnance Survey map, Truro Cottage consisted of a main rectangular block placed symmetrically onto the front path from Green Lanes, with an annexe placed to the rear and to the south. The corners to the north-east and south-west were filled with large glass-houses (Map 3).

There is plenty of evidence for this building in the present structure. For example, close observation of the brick coursing and brick sizing on the entrance front indicates a construction break. The break appears between the two sets of windows on the right of the

7 The *Gazette* article is in the Truro House file in the Local History Unit.

8 Dumayne 1988, p.77.

porch, suggesting that the early nineteenth century house was originally of three bays. Its plan form appears to have had a central passage, with accommodation on either side, a form more commonly found in the seventeenth century. Elements of the house's roof construction may be buried within the existing assembly. This work is likely to date from c.1830. The extension or annexe shown on the OS map is probably a little later, c.1850 on stylistic and fabric grounds. The annexe, unlike the section containing the Entrance Hall, does not stand over a cellar.

Moreover, there is evidence that the house of c.1830 was raised around or on the footprint of an earlier structure. The north-west section of the building, containing the Entrance Hall and Bedroom/Study over, would appear to be the earliest surviving section, buried within a later casing of brick (See Fig. 6). Elements of timber framing and brick nogging, more commonly associated with 18th-century forms of construction, have been exposed on the upper floor landing and in the cellar. This work may represent the King's Arms, as rebuilt in 1775.

## 4.0 *Later Nineteenth Century History and Alterations*

On the earliest Electoral Register to survive for Enfield, that of 1885-6, a Thomas Reynolds Roberts is listed at Truro Cottage. He remained at the property until c.1889, and was apparently a draper of Islington.<sup>9</sup> In the Electoral Registers for 1887, the name 'Truro House' appears in place of 'Truro Cottage', and remains the name to this day. The word 'house' as opposed to 'cottage' implies a rise in status, and it is likely that Roberts was responsible for the series of major late nineteenth-century alterations. These, as will be shown, are classical and French in style.

On the 1891 Census, the name 'Truro House' is again given, although the owner is now 36 year old Frederick Pemberty Colliver, who lives with his wife, three sons, a nurse, housemaid, cook and coachman. In the *Kelly's Directory* for 1894/5, a George H. Frank takes over as owner, remaining at the house until 1897/8.

The Ordnance Survey map of 1896 shows that substantial structural alterations had been made in the thirty-odd years since Truro House had first been surveyed (Map 4). The glass-houses have been demolished, the house extended out to the corners and a kitchen/service range has been added to the north. A porch can be clearly seen, and the entrance (west) front has been given its extra bay, making it asymmetrical. On the south of that extra bay a semi-circular window has been added.

In terms of evidence presented by the fabric, the prostyle Corinthian porch and bay window are certainly contemporary (Figs. 10 and 11). Both are in the classical, French influenced style of the eighteenth century and, more interestingly, both are cast in and constructed of concrete. Rusting stains on some of the more substantial members suggest buried reinforcement has been used. The use of concrete, almost forgotten since Roman times, was revived in France and became more common only after 1850, when François Coignet's Church of Le Vesinet was constructed entirely of the material. Thus, these additions at Truro House represent an early, rare and important use of concrete for decorative purposes, particularly within the London Borough of Enfield. The shutters of the bay window are made of steel and appear to open inwards, in the French fashion.

The room which was added in place of the south-west glass-house, and to which the bay window belongs, is now known as the Drawing Room or Ball Room. It is a large space, opening off the Entrance Hall, and is French in style (Fig. 12). The walls are covered with panelling, some of which opens to reveal secret cupboards and drawers. The bay window is set off internally by two Ionic marble columns, deep red and ornate (Fig. 13). The ceiling has painted decoration and the walls are adorned with plaster swags and sconces. Unfortunately, the fireplace has recently been stolen, but appears to have been rich and to have matched those in the south-west and north-east bedrooms, also stolen (Fig. 14). The fireplace surviving in the north-west bedroom seems to date from this period and gives an approximation of the style (Fig. 15). The back of the doors to the Drawing Room — originally a double set — are mirrored, as are expanses of the room (Fig. 16). The awkward access arrangements between Drawing Room and Entrance Hall, coupled with the difference

<sup>9</sup> A letter in the Truro House file at the Local History Unit, written by the Director of Libraries in 1969, mentions Roberts as a 'draper of Islington'. This may or may not be correct, given that there are other mistakes in the letter.



in floor to ceiling heights in lower and upper floors, suggests that this room, including its bay, may have been specifically designed to incorporate earlier panelling, adapted for its present use here.

The internal schemes of the south-west and north-east bedrooms are certainly of the same period as the Drawing Room (Figs. 17 and 18). The kitchen also dates from this time but, as we shall see, has been reworked at a later date. If any alterations were made to the annexe block of c.1850 — and there is evidence that the Dining Room was once linked to the Drawing Room — they have been lost in the major changes of the early twentieth century.

What we have here then is a aggrandising of a modest, cottage or villa-style structure. Importance has been given to the entrance front where the early-nineteenth century windows, probably sash, have been increased in size to match those of the new block built at the south-west). All of this work, given the change of the name 'Truro Cottage' to 'Truro House' in 1886/7, was probably done in the mid to late 1880s, under the ownership of draper T. R. Roberts. The style is the uncluttered 'Old French' or 'Tous les Louis' which became popular from the early 1830s. In 1836, Loudon commented that:-

'During the past year, and for two or three years preceding, it has become fashionable to import, for fitting up English mansions, the furniture, chimney pieces, wainscotting, and carved wooden ornaments of dismantled French châteaux;'<sup>10</sup>

The style is thus used rather late here, although the interiors of Truro House also have strong resemblances to the 1870s schemes by Parisian decorator Alexander-Eugène Prignot (b.1822) (Fig. 19).<sup>11</sup> Whatever the case, 'Old French' was certainly one of the most exuberant styles used during the Victorian period, and was the most self-consciously aristocratic.

10 Banham, Macdonald, and Porter 1991, p.60.

11 See figures 372-4 in Gere 1989.

## 5.0 *Early Twentieth Century History and Alterations*

The Davis family, owners of Truro House for nearly 100 years, arrived in time for the birth of their only daughter, Charlotte Jeanne Madeleine, in September 1897 (Fig. 20). The head of the family was George Emile Davis, a civil engineer born c.1873, whose wife was a French woman, Charlotte Marie Henriette (formerly Chartier). George's mother, known as 'Madame Davis', also lived at the house until the 1930s.<sup>12</sup> George Emile is listed as the owner in *Kelly's Directories* right through until 1922, when he died of a stroke at the age of 48 (Fig. 21). At that point he worked as a Screw Manufacturer, and this is borne out by a letter from a former servant at Truro House, who writes:-

'The Davis family were part of the Davis & Timmins Screw Manufacturers of Wood Green. The Timmins came to visit the old lady once while I was there'.<sup>13</sup>

In the 1914/15 street directories, Davis & Timmins Ltd, Screw Manufacturers and Metal Merchants, are listed at Brook Road and Clarendon Road, Wood Green. The firm is still listed — at Brook Road only — in 1938, the last of the series of directories. It seems likely that George had inherited a part in the family business. Truro House was certainly a convenient distance away, Brook Road being just off Mayes Road, close to its junction with Green Lanes.

On George Davis's death in 1922 his wife, known as 'Madam George', inherited Truro House and effects worth £5731 13s 4d, a substantial sum.<sup>14</sup> The *Kelly's Directories* list her there until 1936, when she is succeeded her daughter. Charlotte J. Davis died, unmarried and childless, in 1995, at the age of 98, having lived for her whole life in Truro House. She left the property in the hands of a couple who had helped her over her latter years. They sold it to the present owners in 1999.

There is little difference between the Truro House shown on the Ordnance Survey map of 1896 and that shown on the map of 1914 (Map 5).<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, the interior had been — or was in the process of being — radically transformed. A weather-vane over the mock-Tudor gable on the south front — the only external sign of early twentieth-century alteration — bears the date 1917, and this probably signifies the completion of a campaign of work. The most impressive features of Truro House date from this period, a time when the Davis family were becoming firmly established and when, presumably, Davis & Timmins Ltd were flourishing. Perhaps George Emile had just inherited a sum of money, or an interest in the family firm, or maybe he found the enormous growth of Palmers Green after 1904 an incentive to improve his own property.

Firstly, it should be noted that under the Davis family, at least since the 1930s, the orientation of the house was reversed. The front gate and main entrance from Green Lanes were never

12 See the letter from former servant Mrs Nash, written in 1993 and now in the Truro House file in the Local History Unit. Mrs Nash started work at Truro House in the 1930s.

13 Ibid.

14 Index to wills, 1922.

15 The fact that the mock-Tudor timbered bay is not shown on the OS maps until 1959 reflects that the house was not re-surveyed until that time.

used, the family instead favouring the rear door and gate in the wall to Oakthorpe Road.<sup>16</sup> With this in mind, the Dining Room is the first space the visitor reaches, as opposed to the Drawing Room of the earlier period. The Dining Room is the early twentieth-century 'showroom' of the lower floor (Fig. 22). Its style, as with the rest of the Davis alterations, is Tudor or Jacobean, with strong Gothic influences. There are also heavy touches of the French, a reminder of Mrs George Davis's family and heritage. George too, given his middle name was Emile, seems to have had French connections. Here, the windows of the east and south fronts were altered to allow for the panelling, although there is no evidence that it was brought from elsewhere.<sup>17</sup> Indeed, it is rather the opposite, as it has been said that the panelling of the room was designed and made specially by a travelling apprentice. A design apparently survives, either in the hand of patron or apprentice although, as it has not been seen, it is unclear whether it is as executed<sup>18</sup>. Furniture was also designed especially for the room but this has, alas, recently been sold. Many of the features of the early twentieth-century works are introduced here. For example, chivalric stained glass (that in the bay window reads 'Equabiliter et Diligenter'), parquet flooring, timbered ceilings, ornate cast-iron firebacks, leaded windows, radiators hidden behind screens, and high-quality panelling (Fig. 23). The fireplace surround in the Dining Room is particularly good, with carved figures and crude arched forms (Fig. 24). An early photograph survives, presumably taken after the work was completed, and also shows the furniture (Fig. 25). The elaborate fireback, typical of those in the house, bears a coat of arms and is sixteenth or seventeenth-century in style.<sup>19</sup>

The next main room is the Entrance Hall, which was clearly reworked on the Victorian idea of a 'Sitting-Hall'. An early photograph survives, showing the room with its fittings (Fig. 26). It has a large fireplace, with a ridged hood in the Gothic form (Figs. 27 and 28). Again, there is the timbered ceiling and panelling, and originally tapestries were incorporated into the scheme (recently stolen). As a result of this early twentieth-century work, which also involved redesigning the staircase, the entrance to the earlier Drawing Room was made awkward and one of the double doors became defunct.

The kitchen has no visual reminder of its date of construction, some time in the 1880s. Indeed, it is one of the plainest rooms in the house, tiled all around and only articulated by a 'New Gold Medal Eagle Range', an extremely efficient and popular piece of cooking equipment of the early twentieth century (Figs. 29 and 30). The Range was made by the Eagle Range and Grate Company of Regent Street, a similar model appearing in their catalogue of 1908, and was used in the kitchens of various peers, baronets and knights.<sup>20</sup> (Fig. 31) It can be soundly assumed then, that alterations were made to the kitchen c. 1910.

The first floor hall has been completely reworked by the Davis family as a showpiece of Edwardian piety in the Gothic style. The lobby carries a rib-vault with a central pendant, and the stained glass in the adjacent window (altered during this period) carries the motto 'Christi crux est mea lux' (Fig. 32). A pulpit, supposedly Russian, has been incorporated in a rather

16 See letter from Mrs Nash in Truro House file in Local History Unit.

17 This would explain the existence of a photograph of the house with sash windows (ie. pre-alteration), which is apparently in the hands of Mr and Mrs Tsannos, who inherited all of Miss Davis's effects.

18 This design is presently in the hands of Mr and Mrs Tsannos.

19 Compare those in Gloag and Bridgwater 1948, pp.24-29.

20 Ed. Seabrook and Brear 1996), pp. 111-112. The Eagle Range and Grate Company is listed at 127 Regent Street, the address given on the range in Truro House, in 1914 but not in 1894.

remarkable way as a set of stairs leading to the earlier (south-west) bedroom. It is complete with its sounding board (Fig. 33).

Opposite the north-east bedroom, which is chiefly of the 1880s, is the highlight of the upper floor, the main bedroom or 'Normandy' room. This is completely decked out in panelling, traditionally said to have been dismantled from the family's French chateau (Fig. 34).<sup>21</sup> However, it all seems to fit too well to bear this theory out and, like the Dining Room below, was probably designed especially. Indeed, the panelling of both rooms has certain similarities, taking an unusual crossed form as its main motif. The ceiling is panelled and forms compartments, each containing a painted design (Fig. 35). The fireplace is also painted, with a richness reminiscent of Burges, and there is a staircase ascending to the neighbouring (south-west) bedroom (Fig. 36). The 'Normandy' room, as with the majority of the bedrooms, has a curious plumbed-in wash-stand designed in a small cupboard, behind a panelled front (see Fig. 34).

The walls of the bedroom at the north-west, which may have formed part of the eighteenth century structure and certainly existed in the house of c.1830, are completely hung with 'Toile de Jouy', unfortunately now painted over in emulsion. Interestingly, an early photograph does survive (Fig. 37). 'Toile de Jouy' dates from the eighteenth century but was very popular at the turn of the twentieth century, when a company in France (imaginatively called 'Toile de Jouy') reproduced designs from the original fabrics. The design used here is called 'Occupation Vallageouse', a sample of which is held by the Victoria and Albert Museum.<sup>22</sup> To have suspended fabric before the walls of a room was not rare, though few such schemes survive, and was an expression of wealth and luxury. The 'Toile de Jouy', as it is an eighteenth-century design, is more in keeping with the alterations of the 1880s but, given the French connections of the Davis family, could easily fit into the early twentieth-century works.

The interiors of most of the rooms added in the early 1900s feature cleverly designed secret cupboards and drawers, the panelling opening up in a most surprising manner. It is likely that in those rooms dating from the earlier phase — the Drawing Room, north-east and south-west bedrooms — the panelling was adapted to perform this purpose during the early twentieth-century alterations. The panelling of the north-east bedroom in particular, was probably entirely dismantled to allow the reconstruction of the east wall.

As a whole, these quite remarkable works, almost entirely inward-looking in character, are unique and of a very high standard. Perhaps since Davis was in the construction trade, he is likely to have been more discriminating than the usual client and could have even manufactured some of the metalwork himself, the firebacks for example. He certainly would have been recommended and employed only the best craftsmen. The alterations of this period can be favourably compared with other interiors of the Arts and Crafts movement, particularly those by Morris & Co., taking into account the size of the Truro House and its remote — and not very fashionable — area (Fig. 38). The work is firmly grounded in the revival of the Tudor and Jacobean styles, although is slightly late, given that the greatest of this work was executed in the 1890s. However, a dining room illustrated in W. Shaw

21 The 1999 sales particulars for the house state: 'The house was extended in 1917 and at that time the owners, who were partly of French descent, dismantled an entire bedroom from their chateau in Normandy and re-built it as bedroom 4.' This has not been proven.

22 Information from Linda Parry of the V&A Textile Department. The number of the design is given as 1001. Strangely, the design has been reversed from the original, as it would be in wallpaper.

Sparrow's *Hints on Household Furnishing* (1909) still bears many resemblances to the Davis work (Fig. 39). The way that the eighteenth-century style scheme of the 1880s is merged with this later campaign is quite striking — at least internally — and every effort was clearly made to present a seamless finish.

## **6.0 *Subsequent Alterations***

There have been only minor alterations carried out to Truro House following the campaign of the early twentieth century, and those are chiefly centred on the service rooms. Firstly, the kitchen section has been rebuilt, as is shown by the external brickwork. Single storey service buildings have been added to the north, probably c. 1950. In the return of the house to the north-west, external storage and a cellar (possibly intended as an Anderson shelter) have been built.

Internally, the bathroom above the main entrance door has been improved. The WC, almost certainly situated outside during the nineteenth century, has been brought in at some point in the later twentieth century (Fig. 40).

Much more recently, a buttress has been added to support the south-east corner of the house, which is suffering from subsidence (the cellar does not extend beneath this section).

## 7.0 *Gardens and Outbuildings*

The gardens of today are not very different from those shown on the Ordnance Survey map of 1867, an unusual fact given the extent of the subsequent internal alterations (Map 3). Traces of a curved terrace to the south of the building can still be clearly seen, as can most of the formal walks shown. The formal grounds seem to have proved more than sufficient for the Davis family.

In the 1970s, Miss Davis sold off a section of land at the rear of her plot, on the banks of the New River, to the council for the erection of an old people's home. The locals knew the spot as Honeysuckle Lane, the name of which has been fittingly used for the home (Honeysuckle House).

The present 'Gardener's Cottage', though of less architectural interest than Truro House itself, is also nineteenth-century (Figs. 8 and 9). The building appears on the 1867 OS map, with the attached workshop and open courtyard, and in plan form is almost unchanged (illus - map 1867 and modern os). On the 1871 Census return, the 'room above the stable' has a separate entry under Truro Cottage. Although the room is occupied by a gardener, the building was clearly in use as stables. In 1881, the separate entry is headed 'The Stables, Truro Cottage', and a coachman lives there with his wife and child. In 1891, there is still a 'coachman' listed, although not separately. In the 1861 Census, however, no mention is made of stables at all (see appendix). Therefore, it is fair to conclude that the existing block was constructed some time between 1861 and 1867, not long after the annexe had been added to the main house. The outbuilding was used throughout the nineteenth century and, as a piece of Gothic style panelling is incorporated into the lower accommodation and there have been modern alterations, certainly into the twentieth. The stable and coach-house are well-preserved, with some internal features. The room above the coach-house seems to have originally served as a hay-loft.

The kennels, and most of the greenhouses (one does appear on the 1896 OS map and remains in position today) date from well into the twentieth century.

## **8.0 Conclusion and Recommendations**

Anyone viewing Truro House from the outside would be forgiven for assuming it a slightly unusual, but nonetheless conventional villa of the early to mid nineteenth century. However, as we have shown, it is of much more considerable interest, and is a remarkable survival in what is now an overwhelmingly twentieth-century area. Firstly, the house may incorporate parts of an eighteenth-century structure, interesting in itself. The house retains its original — or early — outbuildings and its grounds have been little changed.

Most important is the survival of a near-unaltered internal scheme of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, unconventional in its day and even more remarkable now. Features such as the cast-iron firebacks and early radiators, too cumbersome to be popular as collectors' pieces and thus often lost, survive intact. Given the number of books on nineteenth and early twentieth-century interior decoration, Truro House is worthy of more detailed and widespread study. There is a great deal more to inspect and date, from the roofs (which we did not access) to the parquetry and stained glass panels. Much has already, sadly, been lost and it is imperative that as much of the fabric be preserved for the future as is possible.

The narrative given in the current list description, describes the exterior of this building only. The relatively complete, fine, rich French design to the interiors of the Drawing Room, upper Bedroom and north-east Bedroom c.1890 and the robust, late medieval character of the Entrance Hall, Dining Room and Bedroom over c.1910, give a glimpse of the taste for the exotic, fashionable during this period and are a rare and important survival within this part of London.

The use of concrete to mould and form the late 19th century exterior classical features of this building is also comparatively rare and an important and unusual survival.

Taking all the above into consideration and the apparent earlier origins of the building, there is clearly a need to revise the existing list description and with the new information we have, we feel the building is now of sufficient interest to be considered for regrading.



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- Registers of Births and Deaths: Family Records Centre
- Truro House file: (letters and newspaper cuttings): Enfield Local History Unit
- Valuation List, 1852: Enfield Local History Unit

## *List of Illustrations*

- Fig. 1 Photograph of the Green Lanes front of Truro House, taken in the 1970s.
- Fig. 2 Photograph of Truro House from the south-west, taken in the 1970s.
- Fig. 3 Recent photograph of the mock-Tudor, early twentieth-century bay window on the south front.
- Fig. 4 Photograph of the east front of Truro House, constructed in two separate periods.
- Fig. 5 Photograph of the north front of Truro House, taken in the 1970s, showing the Grade II listed boundary wall.
- Fig. 6 Plan of ground floor, showing phasing of building.
- Fig. 7 General view of grounds.
- Fig. 8 Photograph of the west front of the 'Gardener's Cottage'.
- Fig. 9 View of the south front of the 'Gardener's Cottage', with later greenhouse.
- Fig. 10 The eighteenth-century prostyle Corinthian porch, constructed in concrete in the 1880s.
- Fig. 11 View of the south front with semi-circular bay window, constructed in concrete in the 1880s.
- Fig. 12 The French style Drawing Room, probably constructed in the 1880s using earlier panelling.
- Fig. 13 The French style Drawing Room, probably built in the 1880s, showing the interior of the bay window set off with Ionic marble columns.
- Fig. 14 The east wall of the French style Drawing Room, probably built in the 1880s. The fireplace has recently been stolen.
- Fig. 15 The fireplace in the north-west bedroom, built in the 1880s but reworked in the early twentieth century. The fireplace survives from the earlier period, and gives some idea of the appearance of those that have been lost.
- Fig. 16 The French style Drawing Room, showing the mirrored inside of the original double doors.

- Fig.17 The French style south-west bedroom, probably dating from the 1880s and contemporary with the Drawing Room.
- Fig.18 The French style north-east bedroom, probably dating from the 1880s and contemporary with the Drawing Room. This room was reworked during the early twentieth-century alterations.
- Fig.19 Three schemes by the Parisian decorator Alexander-Eugène Prignot, dating from the 1870s.
- Fig.20 Birth certificate of Charlotte Jeanne Madeleine Davis, who died in 1995.
- Fig.21 George Emile Davis's death certificate of 1922, showing his occupation as 'Screw Manufacturer'.
- Fig.22 Photograph of the Dining Room, redecorated in the early twentieth century.
- Fig.23 The exterior of the early twentieth-century bay window, showing the stained glass which adorns the Dining Room.
- Fig.24 Photograph of the fireplace surround in the Dining Room, built in the early twentieth century in the Jacobean style.
- Fig.25 A photograph of the Dining Room, probably taken on completion of the early twentieth-century works (c.1917).
- Fig.26 A photograph of the Entrance Hall, probably taken on completion of the early twentieth-century works (c.1917).
- Fig.27 Recent photograph of Entrance Hall, showing fireplace with hooded canopy.
- Fig.28 A drawing of the library of John A Burnham, Boston, Mass., USA, built in 1876 incorporating features of the Reformed Gothic interior as advocated by Eastlake. The ridged hood to the fireplace is remarkably similar to that in the Entrance Hall at Truro House.
- Fig.29 The plain, tiled kitchen, originally constructed in the 1880s.
- Fig.30 The 'New Gold Medal Eagle Range' which survives in the kitchen. It dates from the early twentieth century.
- Fig.31 The Gold Medal Eagle Range, as shown in the 1908 catalogue of the Eagle Range and Foundry Company.
- Fig.32 The upstairs lobby, showing the rib-vault with central pendant and the stained glass. Both were added in the early twentieth century.
- Fig.33 The upstairs hall, reworked in the early twentieth century, showing the 'Russian' pulpit which functions as stairs to the south-west bedroom.
- Fig.34 The 'Normandy' bedroom, looking out towards the upstairs hall. The plumbed-in wash-basin is shown on the right of the photograph.
- Fig.35 The compartmentalised ceiling of the 'Normandy' bedroom, showing the painted work.

- Fig.36 The painted fireplace in the 'Normandy' bedroom, richly adorned with fleurs-de-lys.
- Fig.37 A photograph of the north-west bedroom, probably taken on completion of the early twentieth-century works (c.1917). The 'Toile de Jouy', now painted, is hung against the walls.
- Fig.38 An 1890 sketch of the drawing room at Bullers Wood, near Chislehurst, built by Ernest Newton and decorated by Morris & Co. It bears many resemblances to the interior works at Truro House. The fireplace surround, for example, is rather like that in the Dining Room.
- Fig.39 This dining room for a house in Bournemouth, designed by B. Stafford for Morris & Co., was illustrated in W. Shaw Sparrow's *Hints on House Furnishing* (1909). In style, it is akin to the early twentieth-century works at Truro House.
- Fig.40 Photograph of the bathroom, much improved in the later twentieth century.
- Map 1 Detail of the 1801 Enclosure Map, showing the 'King's Arms' on the site of Truro House.
- Map 2 A less detailed version of the 1801 Enclosure Map, showing the land owned by Beckitt & Ostliffe.
- Map 3 First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1867.
- Map 4 Ordnance Survey map of 1896.
- Map 5 Ordnance Survey map of 1914.
- Map 6 Ordnance Survey map of 1936.
- Map 7 Ordnance Survey map of 1959.



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Fig. 2 Photograph of Truro House from the south-west, taken in the 1970s.



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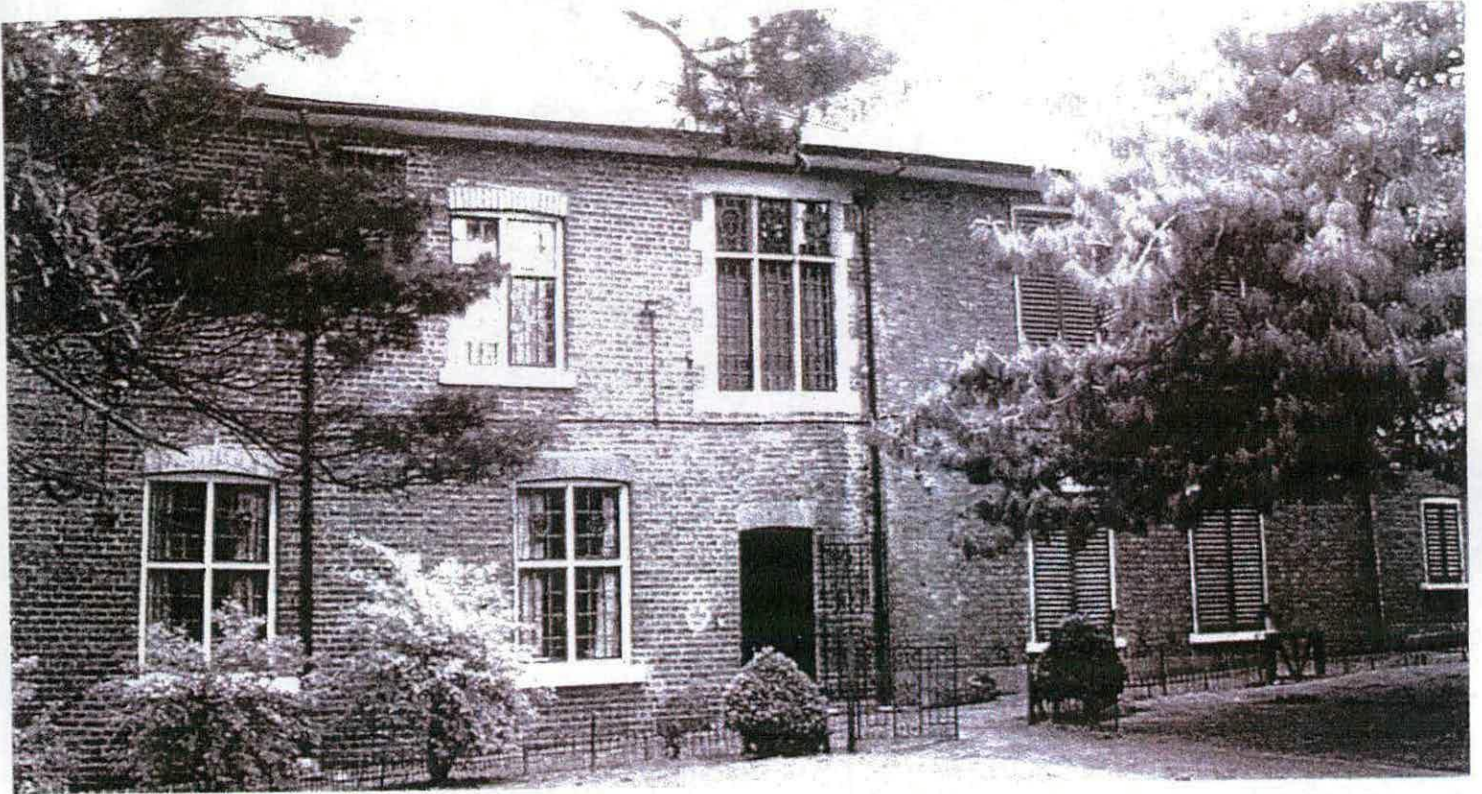


Fig. 4 Photograph of the east front of Truro House, constructed in two separate periods.



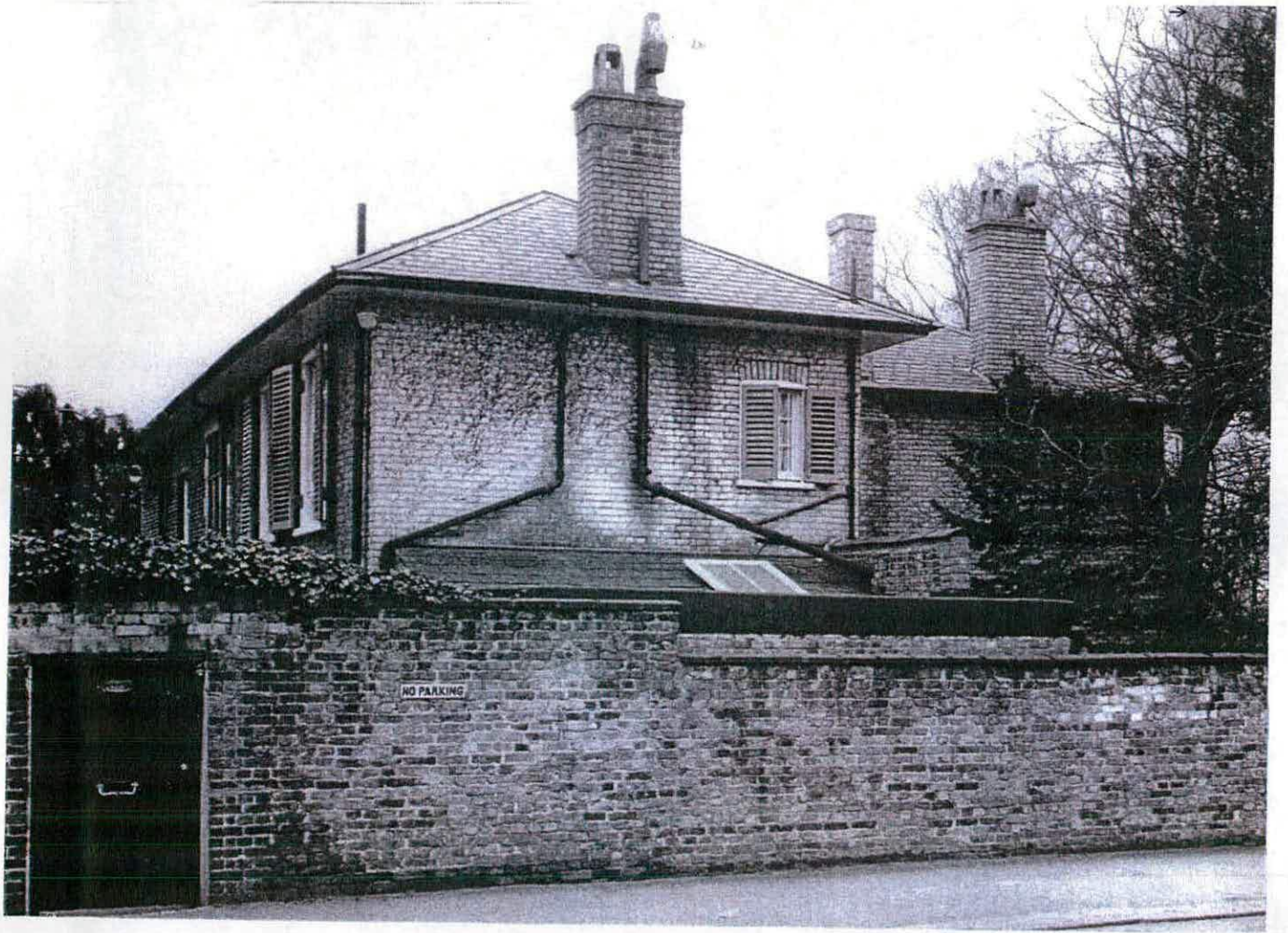


Fig. 5 Photograph of the north front of Truro House, taken in the 1970s, showing the Grade II listed boundary wall.

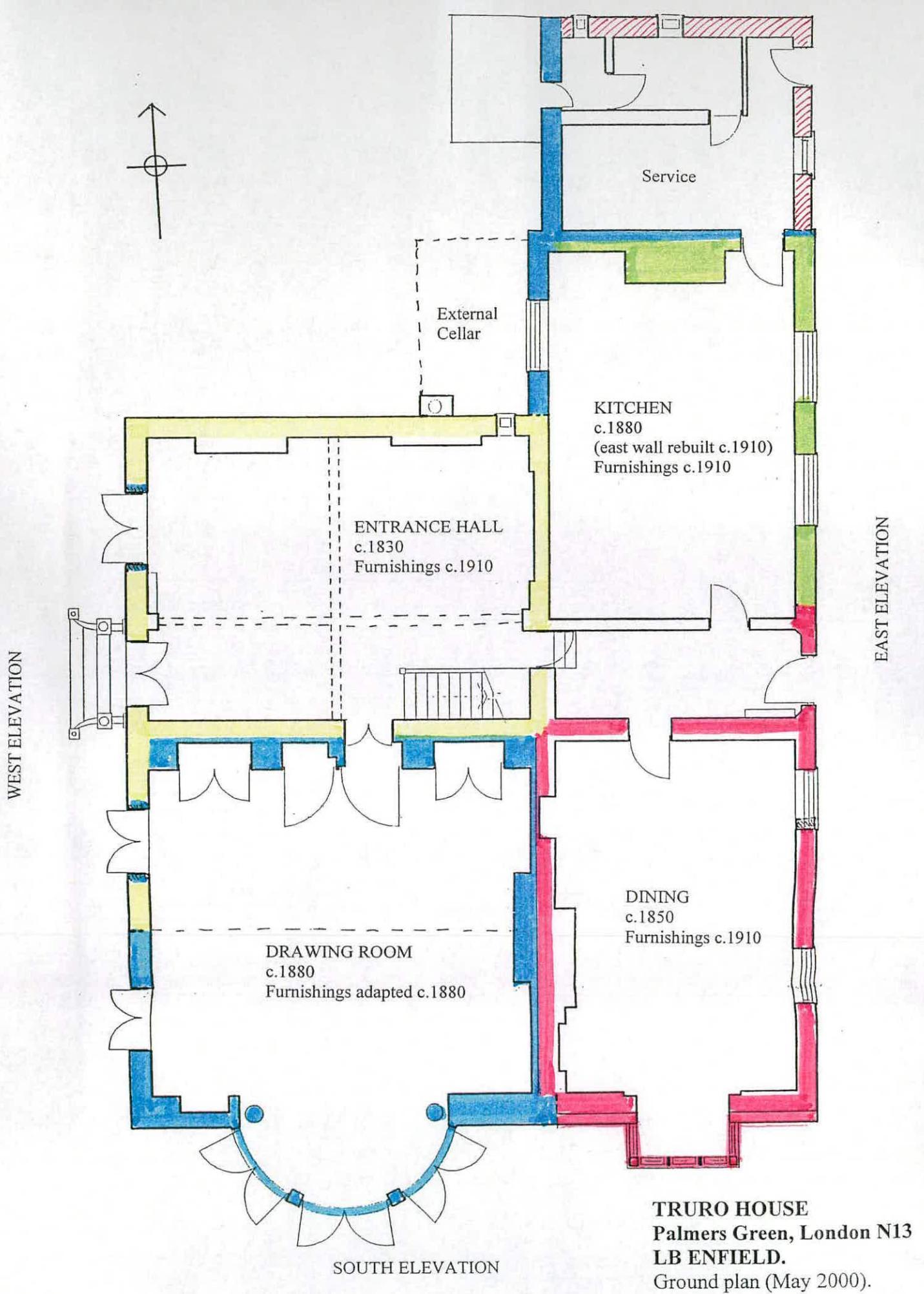


Fig. 6 Plan of ground floor, showing phasing of building.



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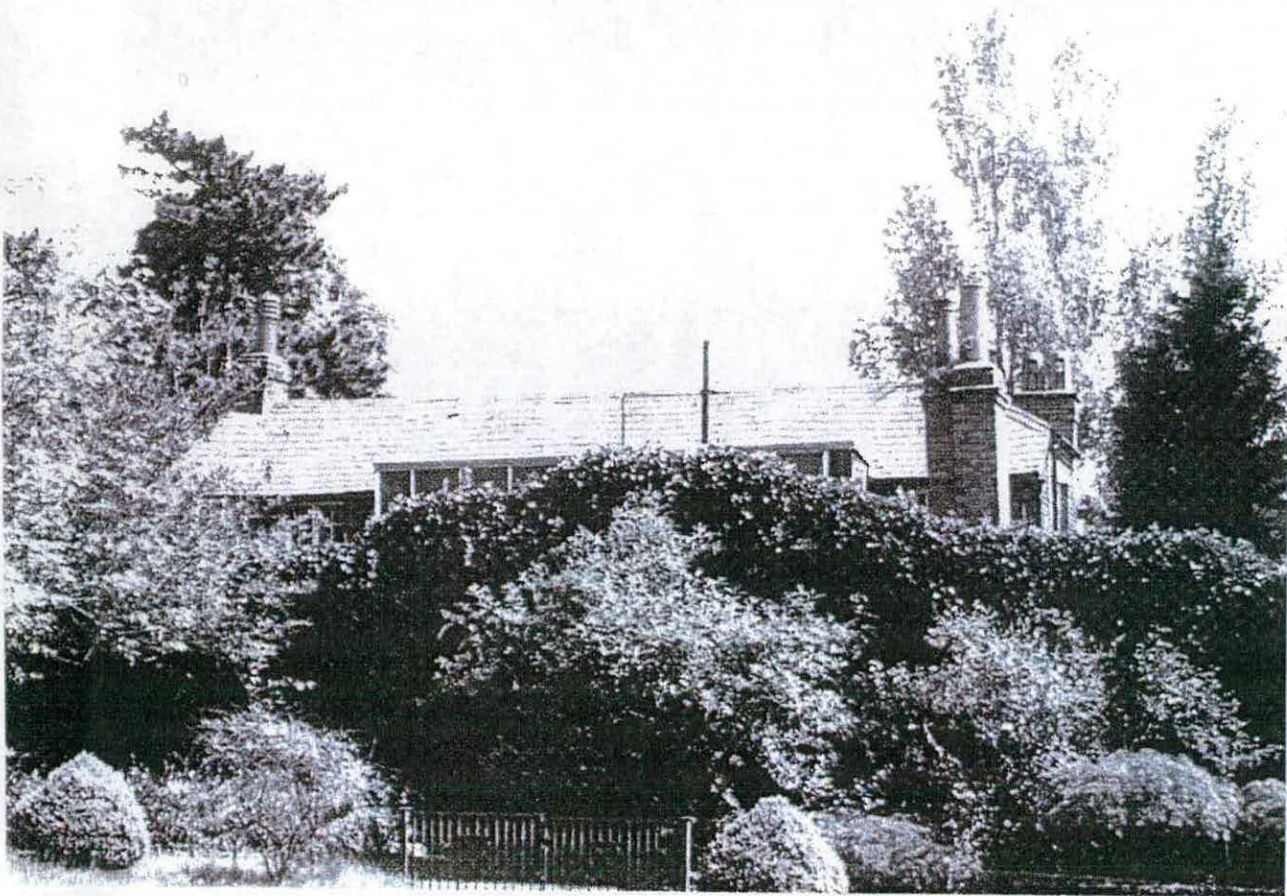


Fig. 8 Photograph of the west front of the 'Gardener's Cottage'.

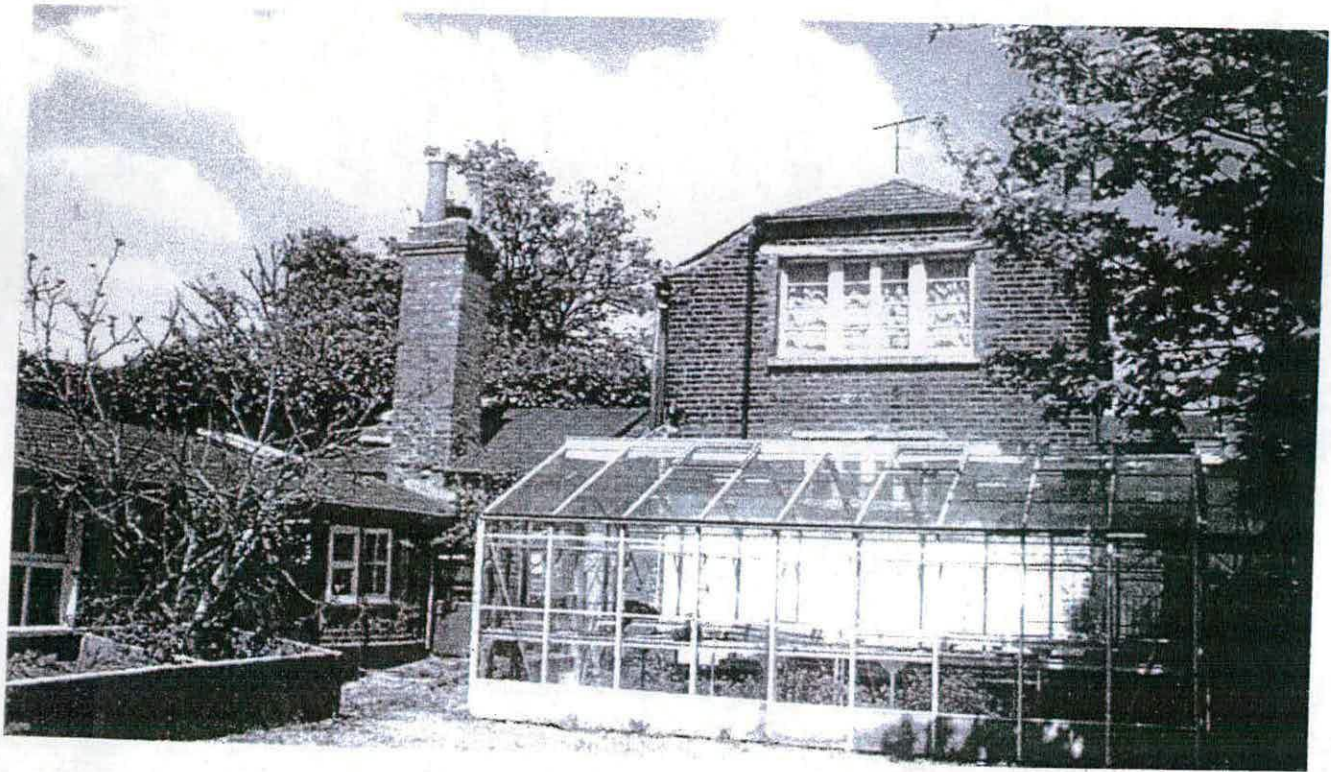


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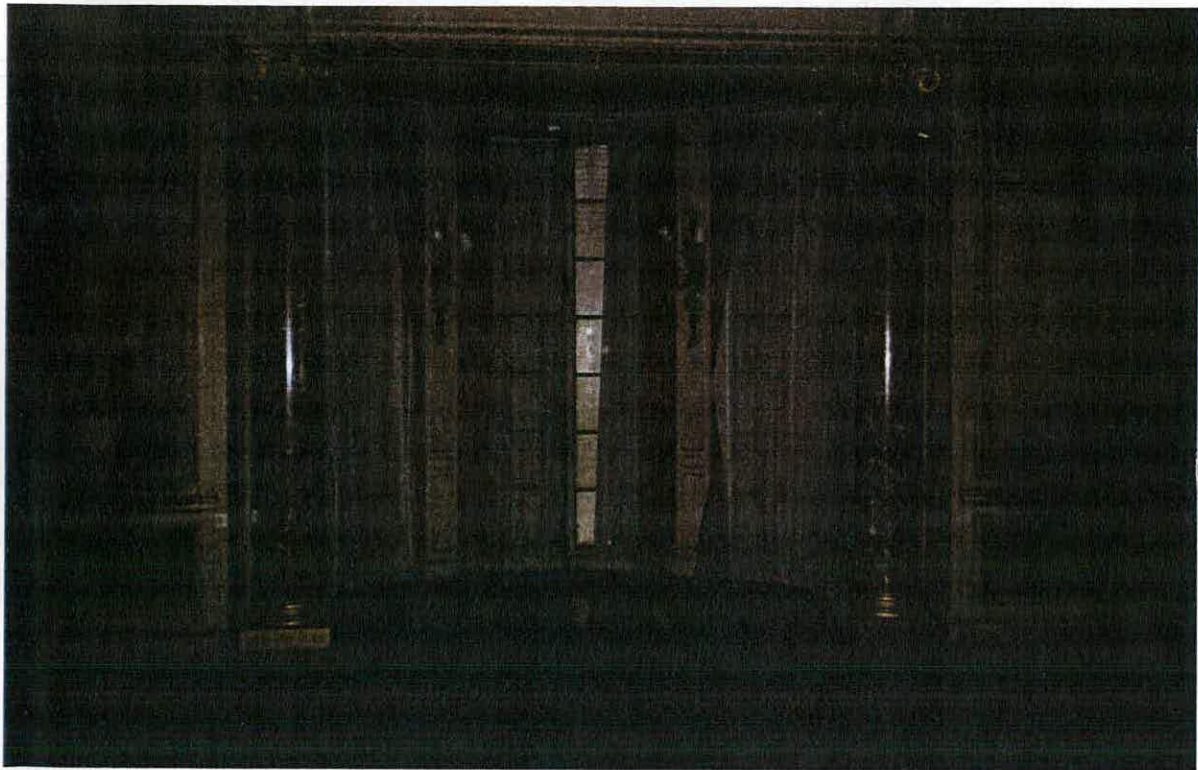


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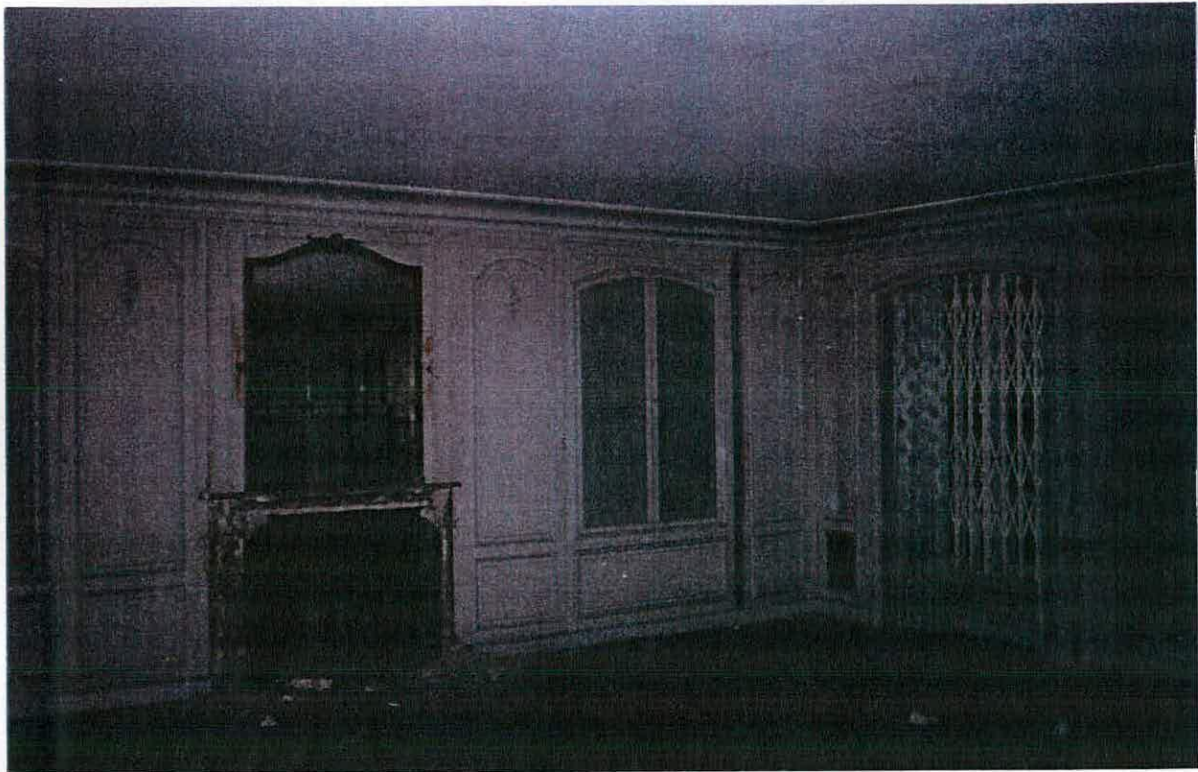


Fig. 17 The French style south-west bedroom, probably dating from the 1880s and contemporary with the Drawing Room.

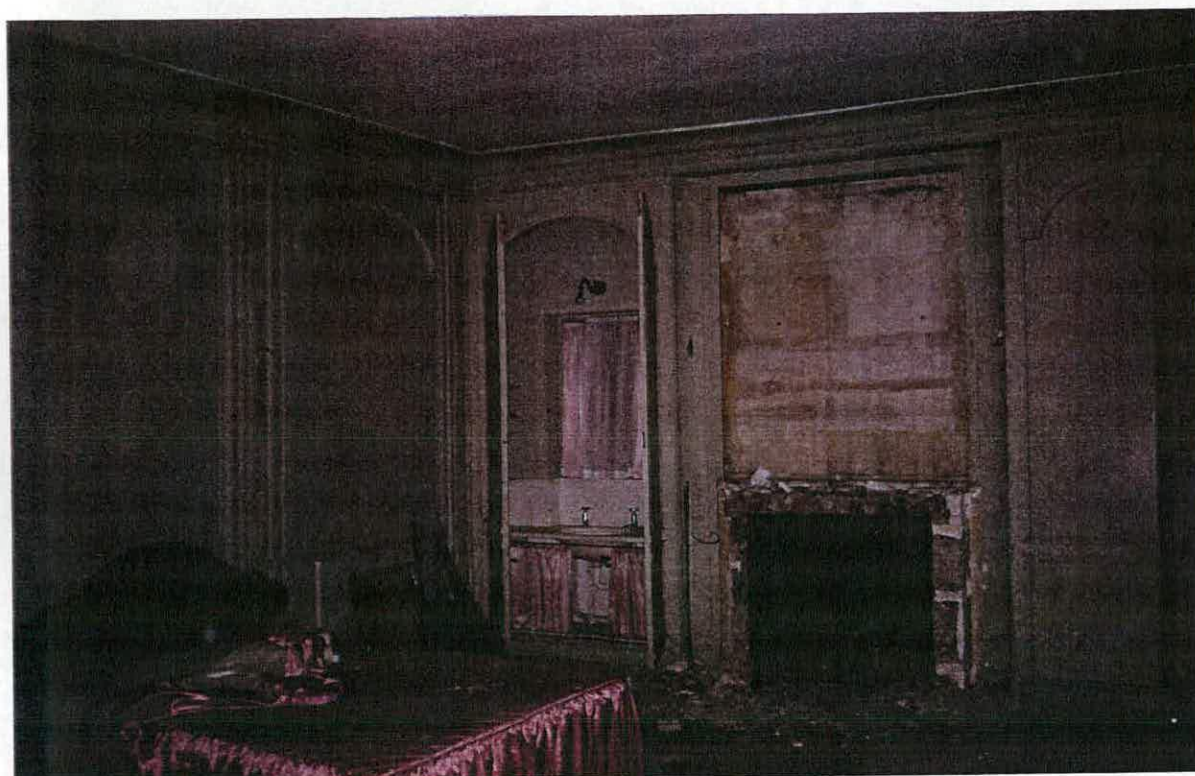
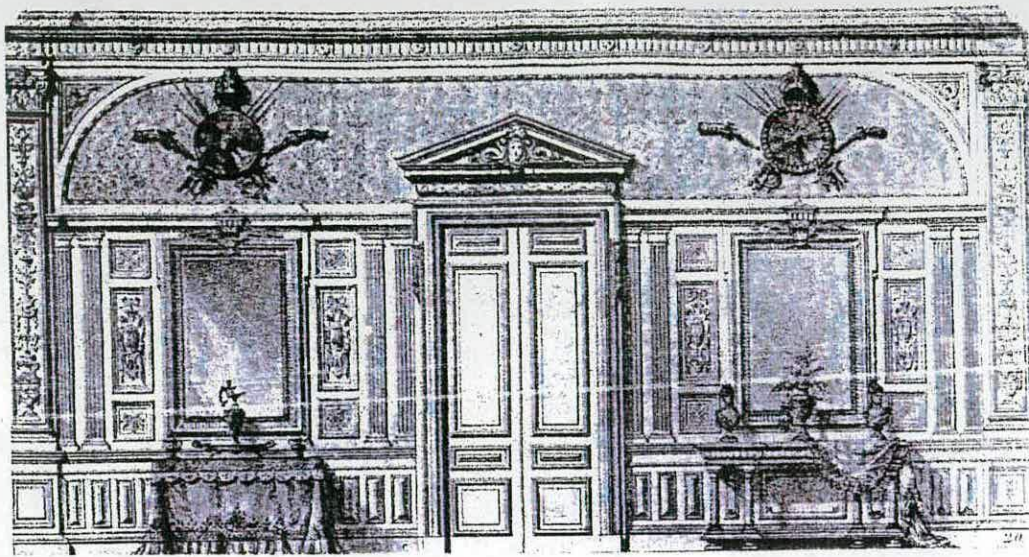
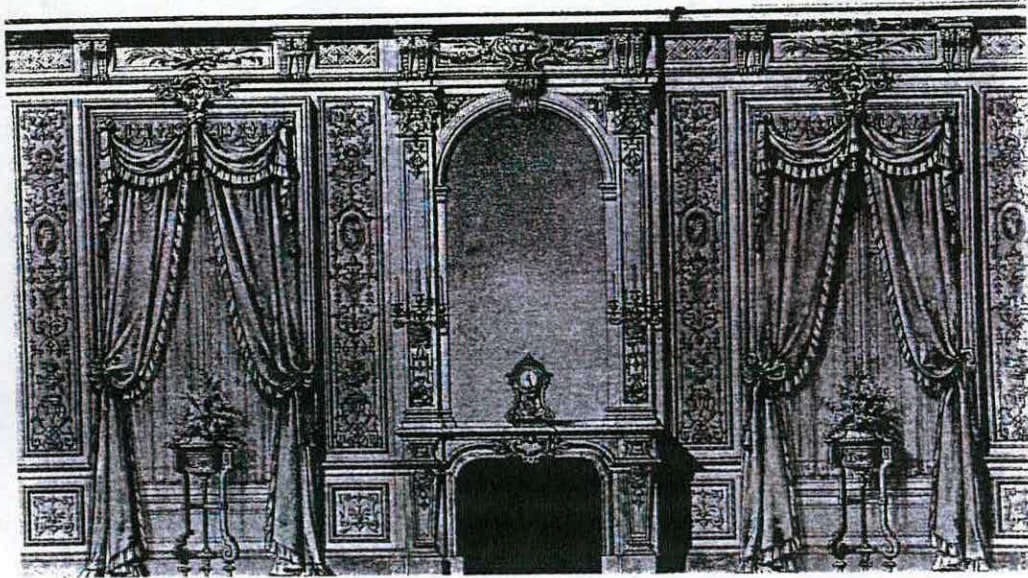


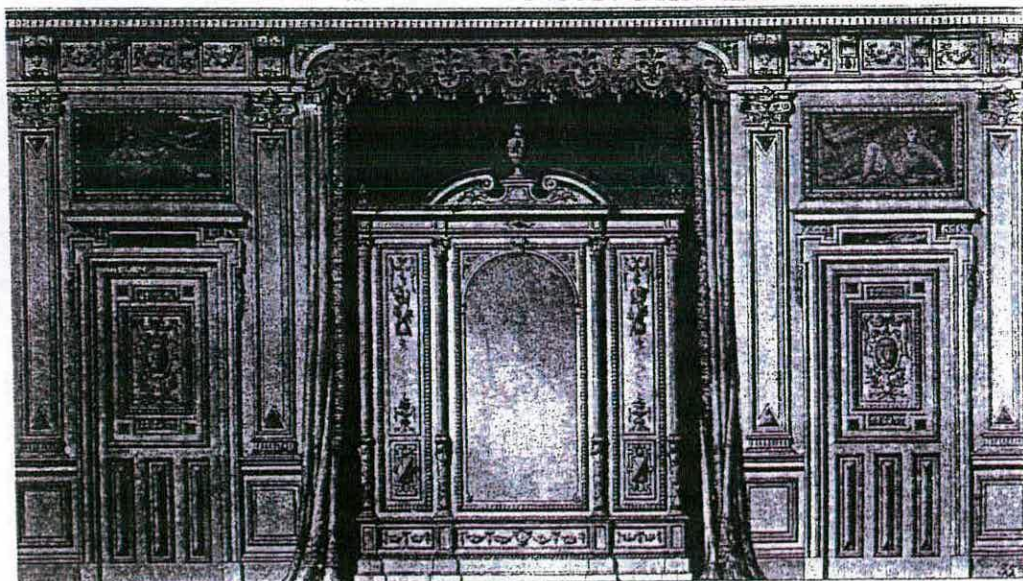
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372



373



374

Fig.19 Three schemes by the Parisian decorator Alexander-Eugène Prignot, dating from the 1870s.

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF BIRTH



GIVEN AT THE GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE

G003697

Application Number

REGISTRATION DISTRICT	Edmonton
1897	BIRTH in the Sub-district of Edmonton in the County of Middlesex

Columns-	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
No.	When and where born	Name, if any	Sex	Name and surname of father	Name, surname and maiden surname of mother	Occupation of father	Signature, description and residence of informant	When registered	Signature of registrar	Name entered after registration

73	Tenth fifth Sept 1897 Furno House Palmer's Green Southgate N.D.	Charlotte Jeanne Madeleine	Girl	George Emile Davis	Charlotte Marie Henriette Davis formerly Chantier	Civil Engineer	G.E. Davis Father Furno House Palmer's Green Southgate	Tenth October 1897	John Harman Judd Registrar	
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CERTIFIED to be a true copy of an entry in the certified copy of a Register of Births in the District above mentioned.

Given at the GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, under the Seal of the said Office, the 5th day of May 2000

BXBY 836364

CAUTION: THERE ARE OFFENCES RELATING TO FALSIFYING OR ALTERING A CERTIFICATE AND USING OR POSSESSING A FALSE CERTIFICATE ©CROWN COPYRIGHT  
WARNING: A CERTIFICATE IS NOT EVIDENCE OF IDENTITY.



Fig. 20 Birth certificate of Charlotte Jeanne Madeleine Davis, who died in 1995.



Fig. 21 George Emile Davis's death certificate of 1922, showing his occupation as 'Screw Manufacturer'.

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF DEATH



GIVEN AT THE GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE

Application Number G003697

REGISTRATION DISTRICT	Edmonton
1922 DEATH in the Sub-district of Southgate	in the County of Middlesex

Columns:-	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
No.	When and where died	Name and surname	Sex	Age	Occupation	Cause of death	Signature, description and residence of informant	When registered	Signature of registrar
31	Twelfth September 1922 Touro House Green Lane no	George Emile Davis	Male	48 years	Screw Manufacturer	Myocarditis Embolism Aortic failure present at the death	G. J. M. Davis Daughter Touro House Palmer Green	Twelfth September 1922	T. B. David Registrar.

CERTIFIED to be a true copy of an entry in the certified copy of a Register of Deaths in the District above mentioned.

Given at the GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, under the Seal of the said Office, the 6th day of May 2000

DXZ 709762

See note overleaf

CAUTION: THERE ARE OFFENCES RELATING TO FALSIFYING OR ALTERING A CERTIFICATE AND USING OR POSSESSING A FALSE CERTIFICATE ©CROWN COPYRIGHT

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DXZ Series DJ 0231 65M 8/99 Mar(20199)





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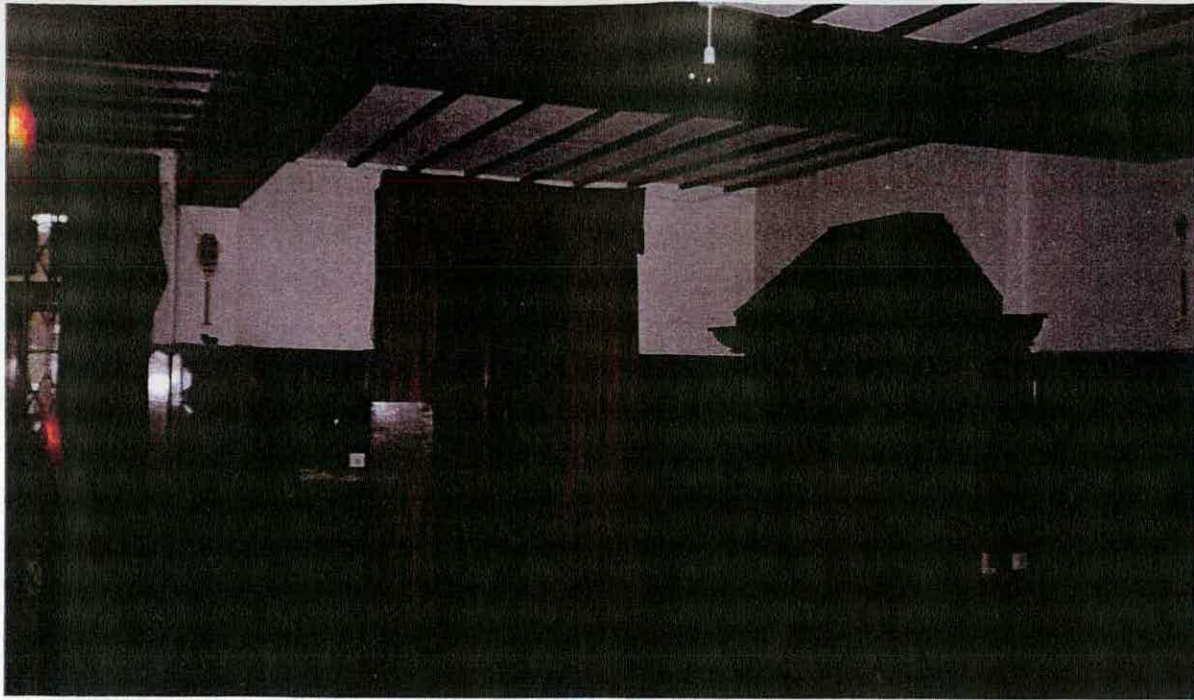


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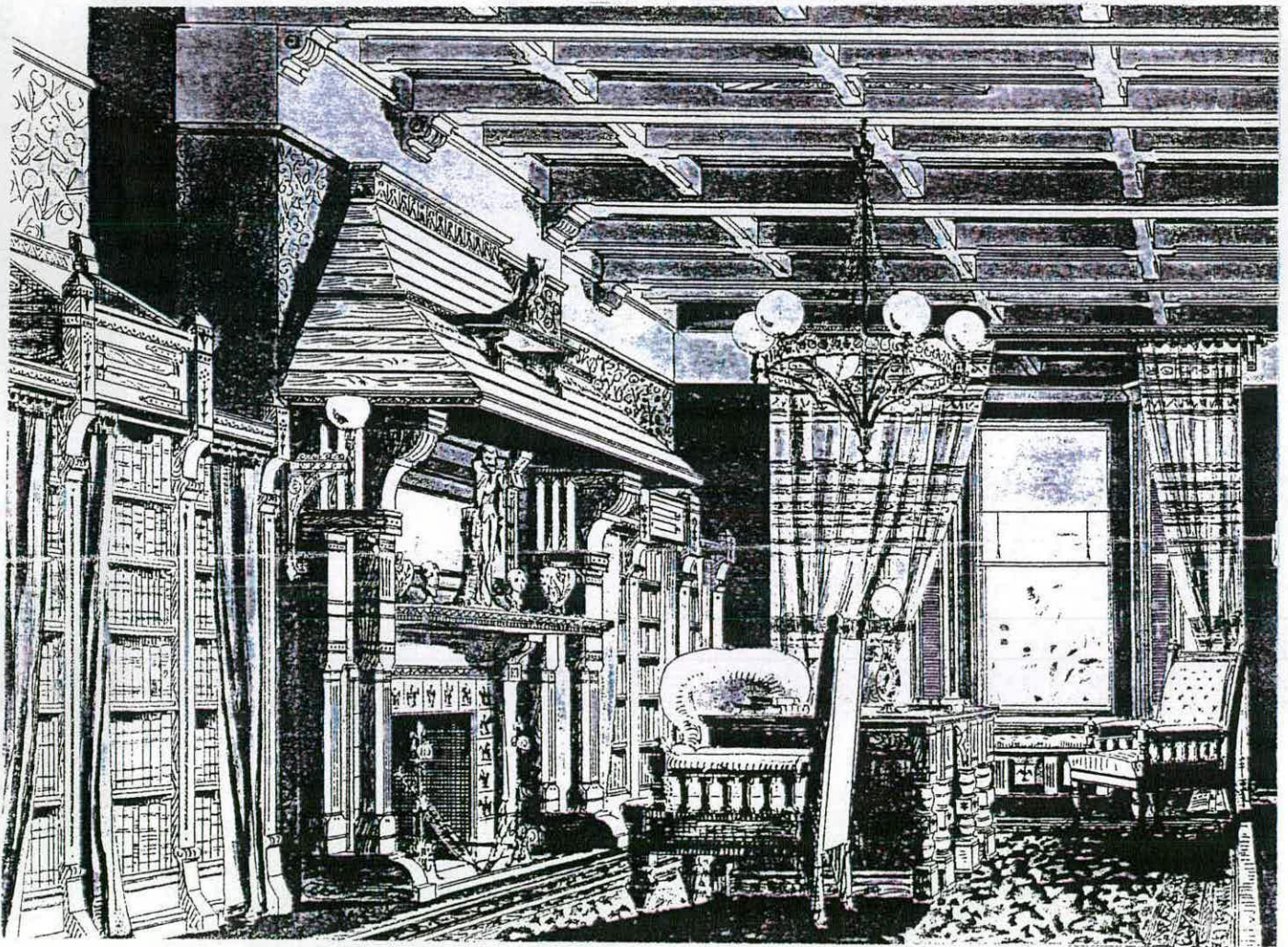


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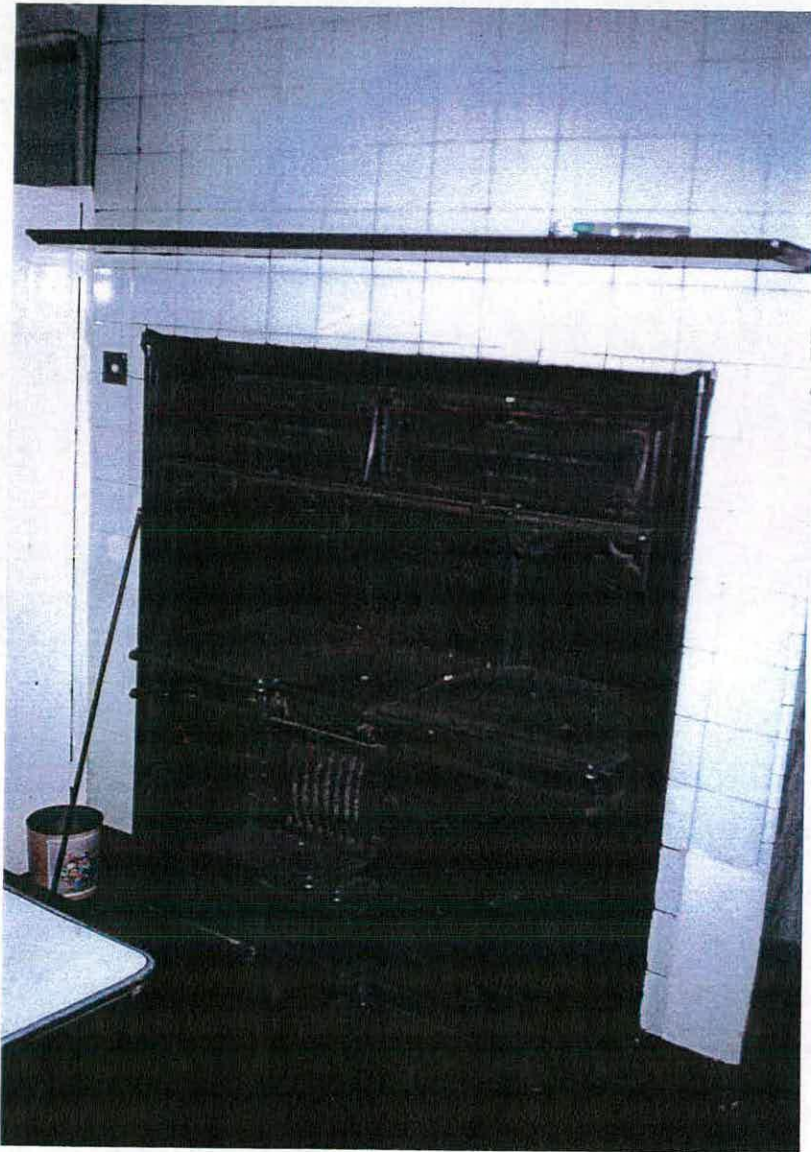


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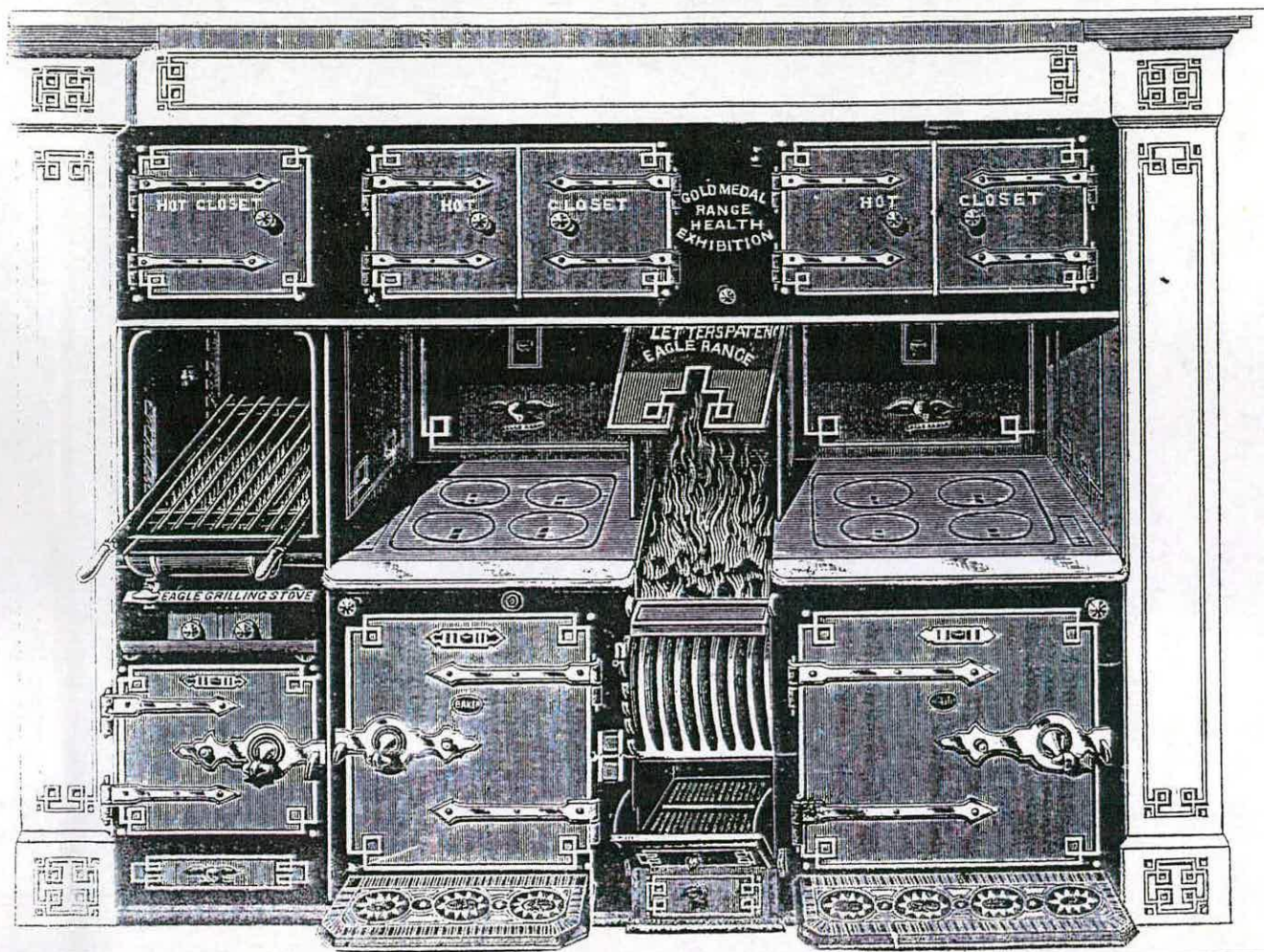


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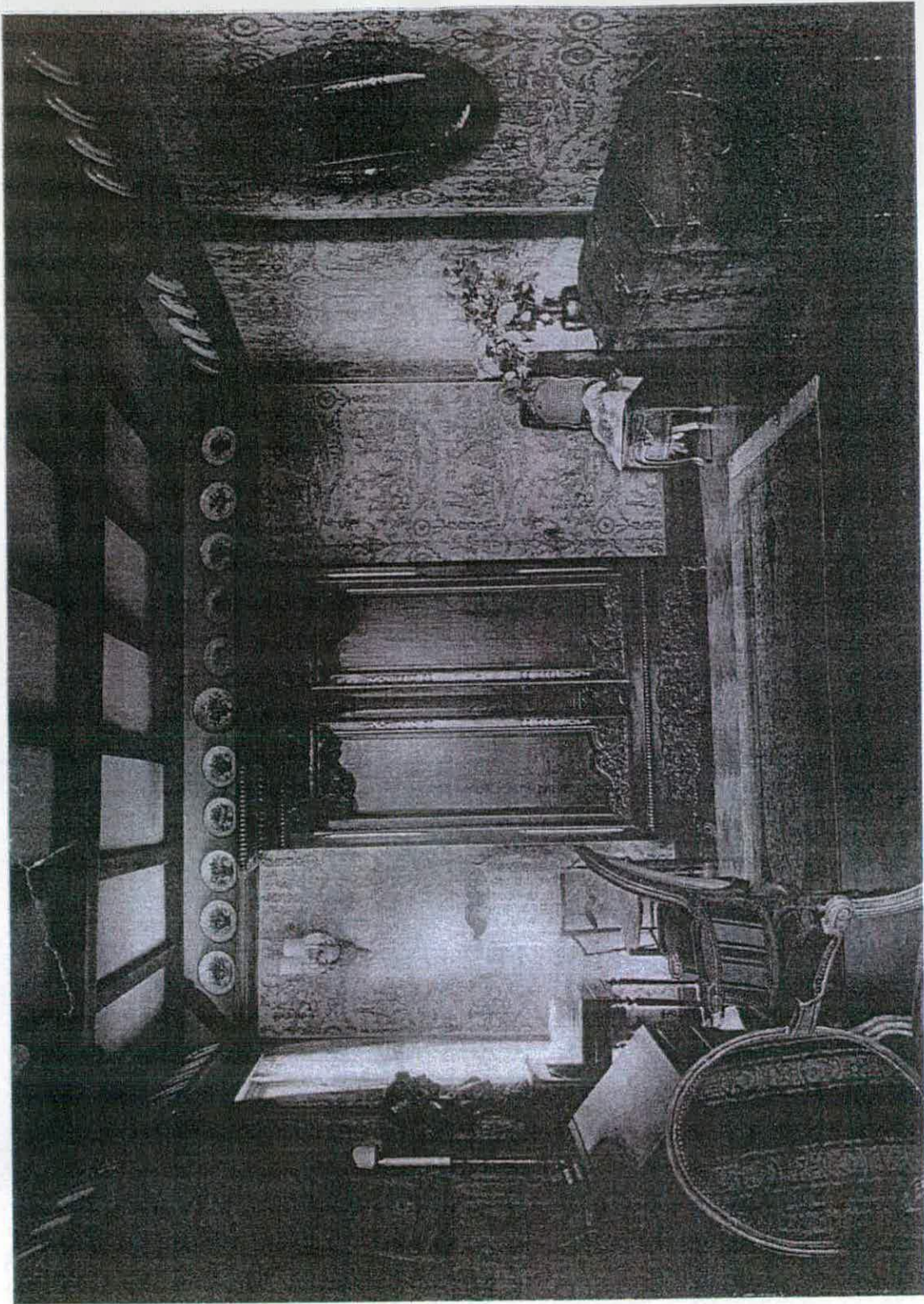


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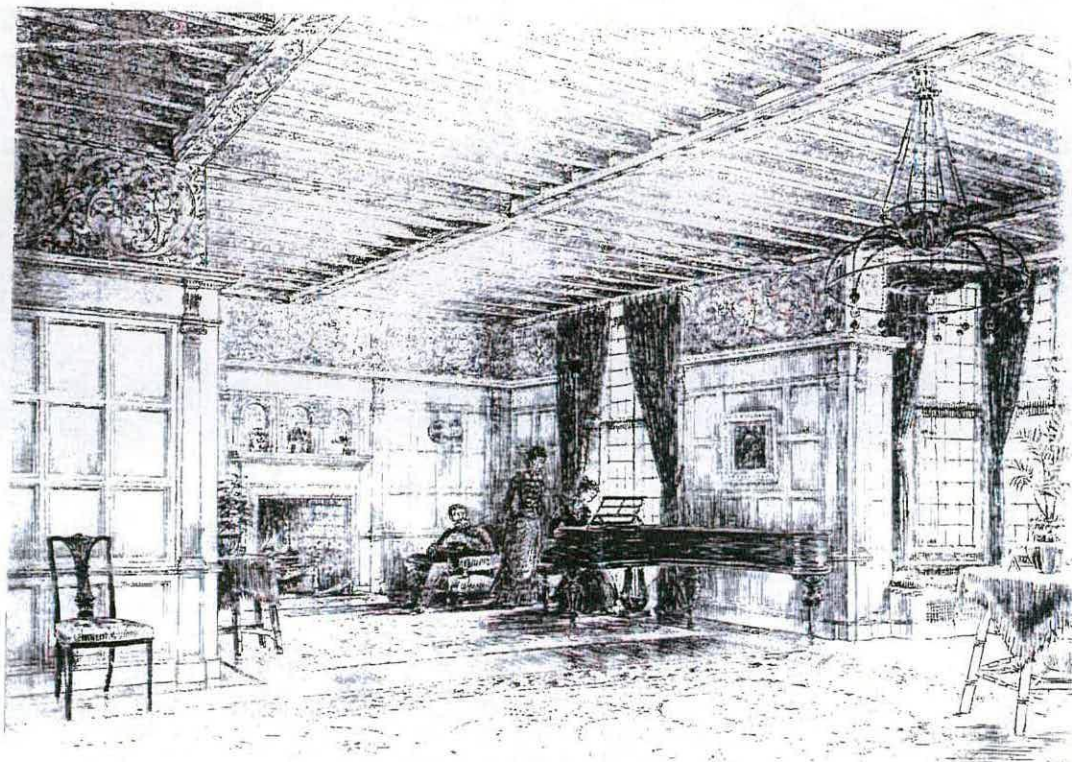


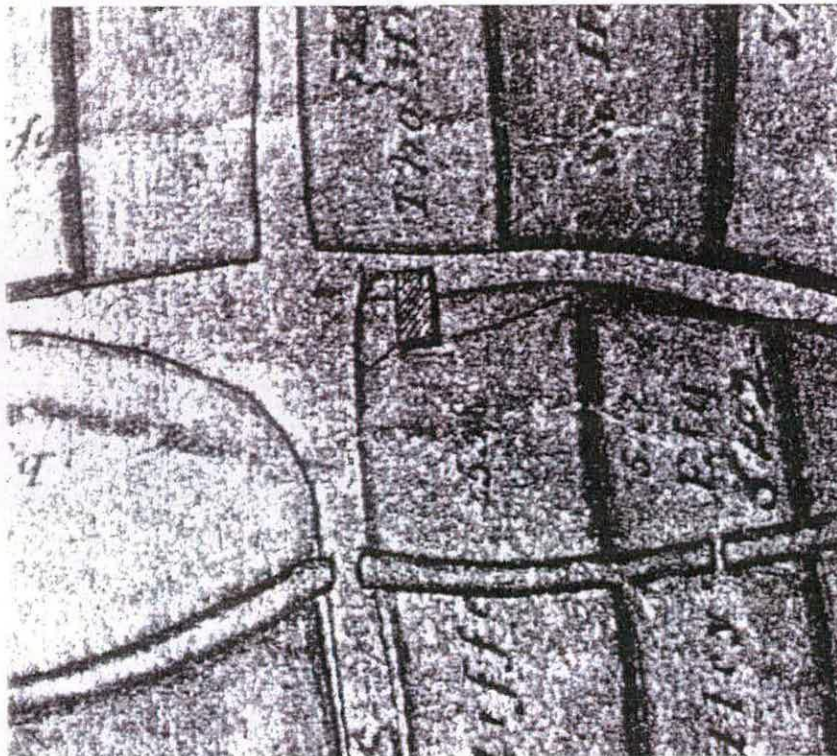
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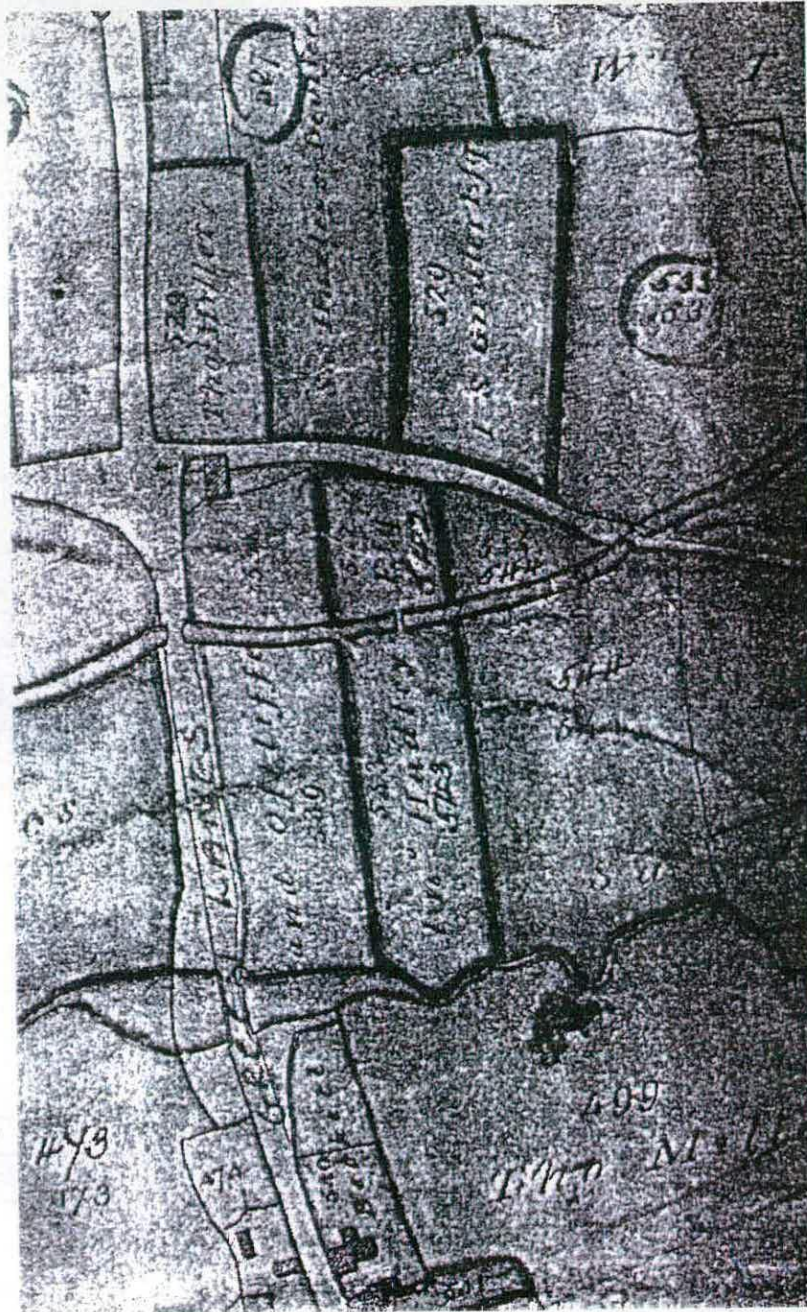
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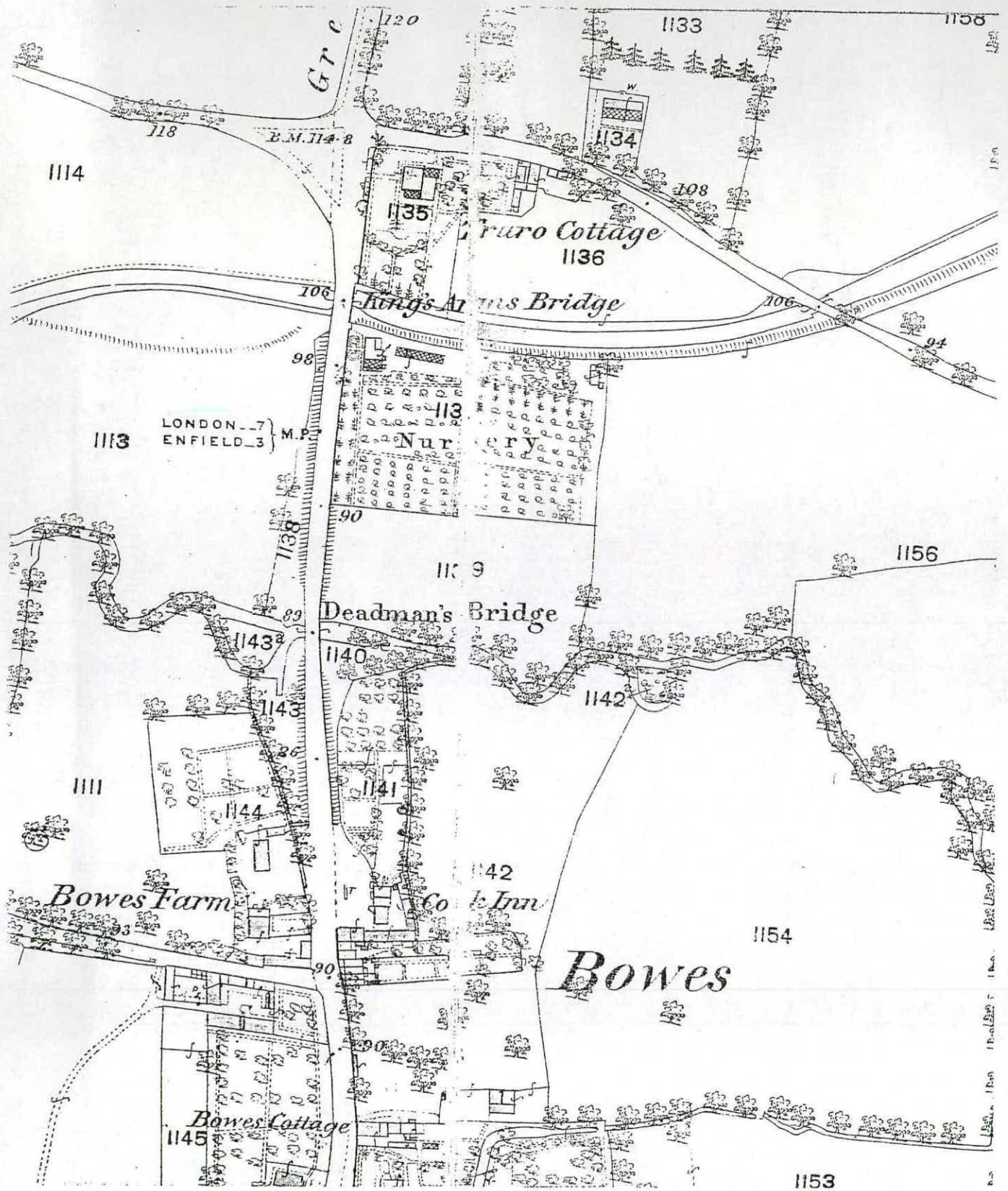
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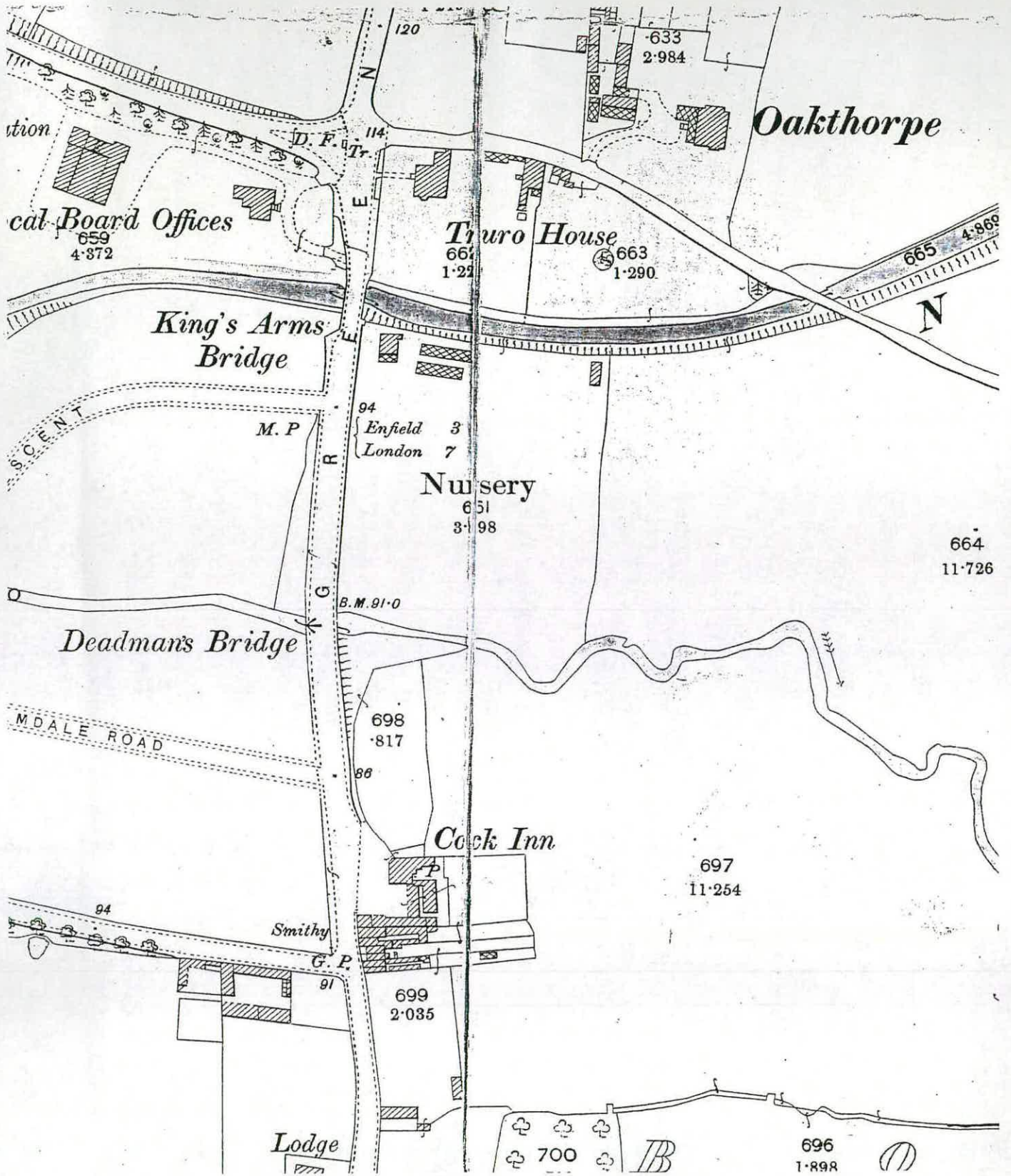
Map 1 Detail of the 1801 Enclosure Map, showing the 'King's Arms' on the site of Truro House.



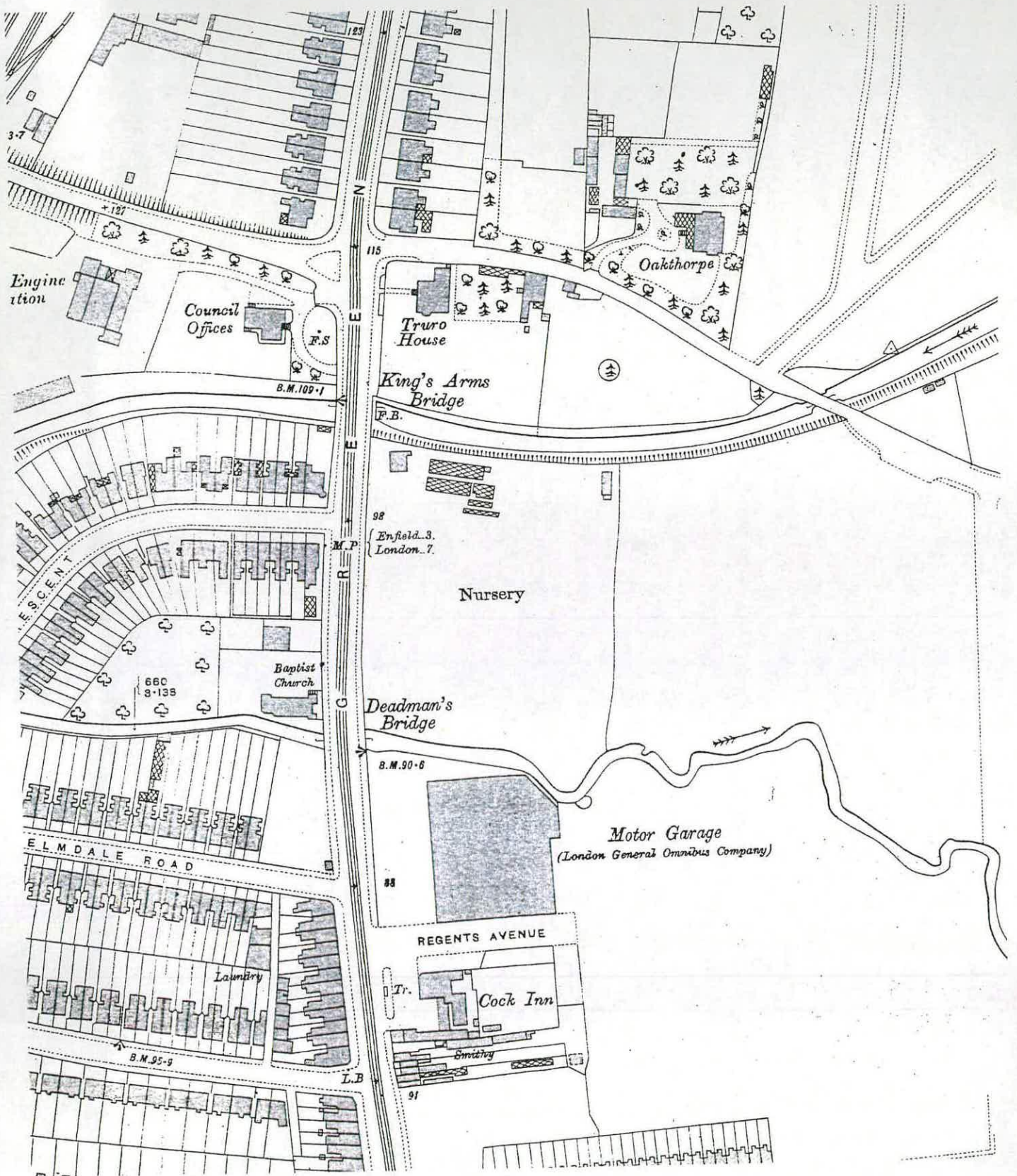
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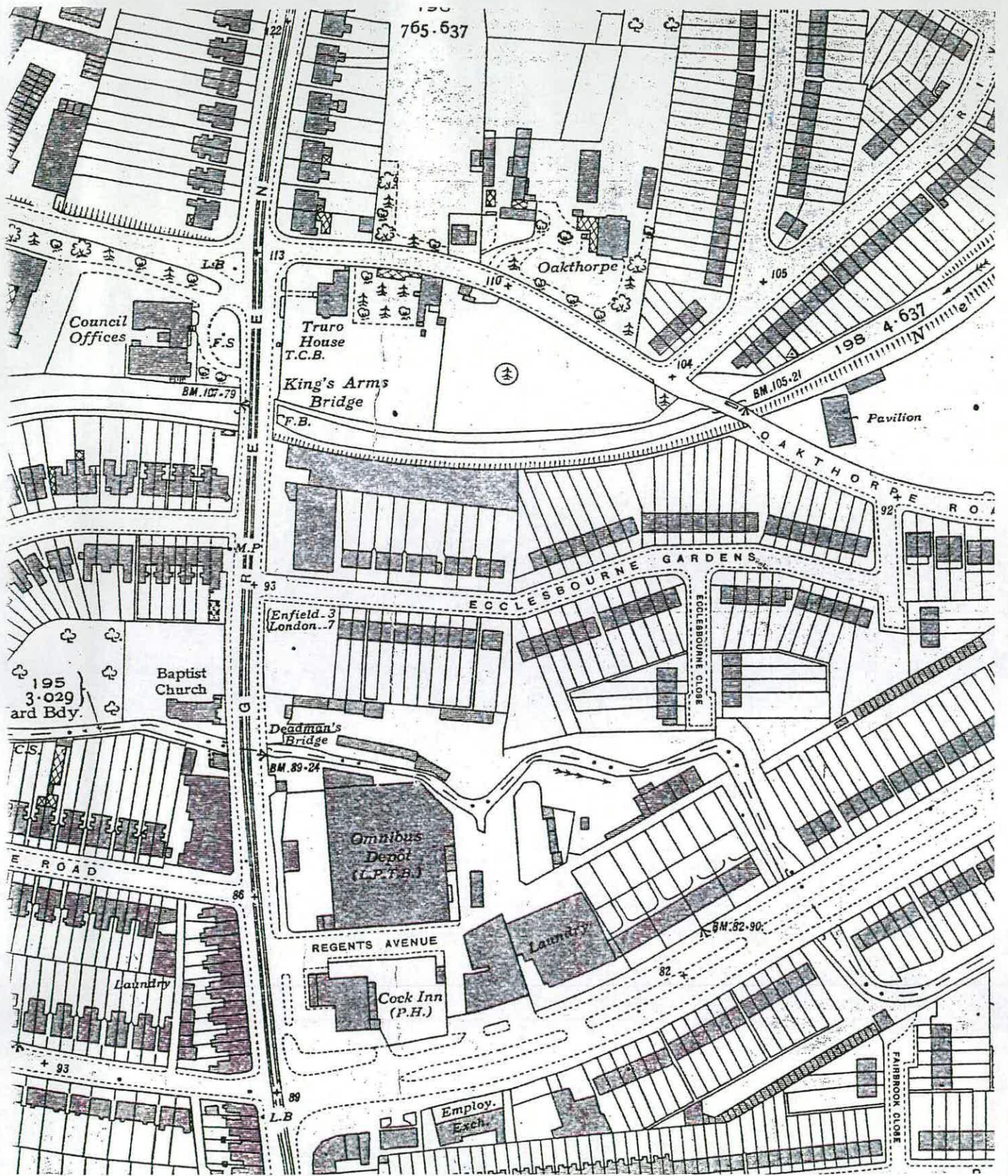


Map 4 Ordnance Survey map of 1896.

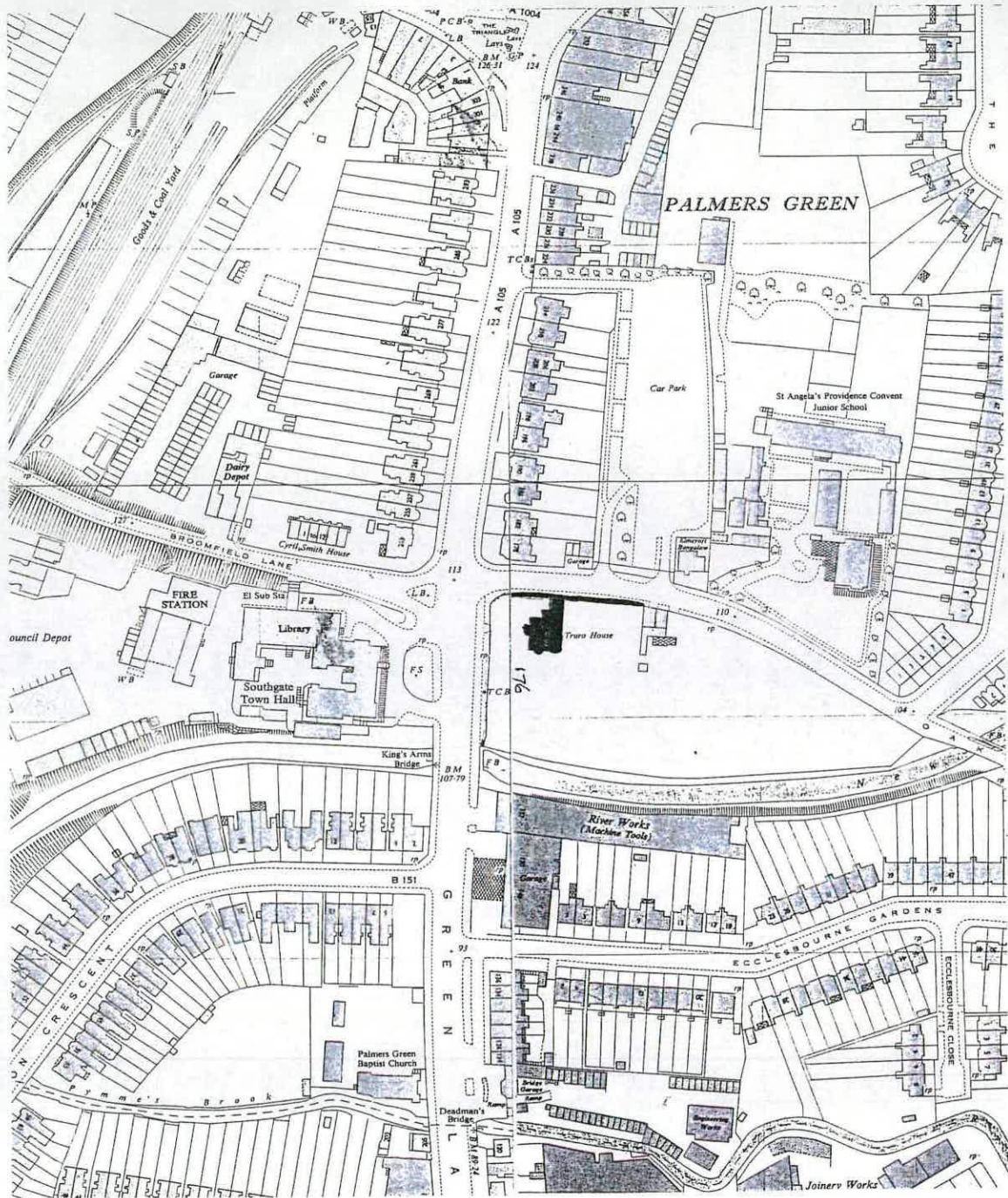


Map 5 Ordnance Survey map of 1914.





Map 6 Ordnance Survey map of 1936.



Map 7 Ordnance Survey map of 1959.